

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2022 with funding from
University of Toronto

<https://archive.org/details/31761114666134>



No. E-1

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Select Committee on Education
Organization



First Session, 34th Parliament
Monday, February 29, 1988

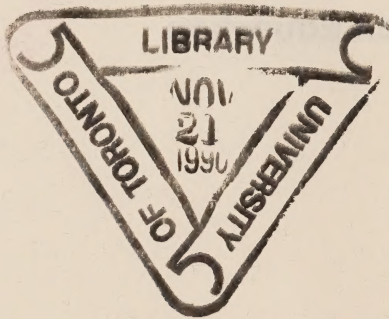
Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario
Editor of Debates: Peter Brannan

CONTENTS

Contents of the proceedings reported in this issue of Hansard appears at the back, together with a list of the members of the committee and other members and witnesses taking part.

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues can be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at (416) 965-2159.



Hansard subscription price is \$16.00 per session, from: Sessional Subscription Service, Information Services Branch, Ministry of Government Services, 5th Floor, 880 Bay Street, Toronto, M7A 1N8. Phone (416) 965-2238.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Monday, February 29, 1988

The committee met at 2:10 p.m. in committee room 1.

ORGANIZATION

Madam Chairman: I would like to open the meeting and call for nominations for vice-chairman.

Mr. Mahoney: I nominate Doug Reycraft.

Madam Chairman: Are there any other nominations for vice-chairman?

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I would nominate Bob Eaton, but—

Madam Chairman: Seeing no other nominations that are in order, congratulations, Mr. Reycraft, as vice-chairman.

The first piece of business we have, after ensuring that we have a vice-chairman, is to decide whether we wish to be a no-smoking committee.

Interjections: Agreed.

Madam Chairman: We progress. So the clerk of the committee has our authorization to ensure that we all obey the letter of the law and no further smoking in the committee, which is excellent.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Why is the clerk smiling?

Madam Chairman: Because she is trying to quit, that is why.

Perhaps before we proceed further, I could introduce the people at the front table for any of those who are not familiar with them. To my immediate left is Bob Gardner, who is the assistant chief, legislative research service. To Bob's left, we have Ann Porter, who is also going to be assisting us with research. They are both assigned to the select committee on education, so I am sure we will be welcoming their input. To my right, I think many of you may know Lynn Mellor, who will be the clerk of this committee. To her right, we have Beth Grahame, who is working with Hansard.

My goodness, we are progressing very rapidly. I am now down to point 2 of our agenda, subcommittee appointments. Let us do it. The precedent is that we nominate one from each caucus. I also think, as precedent, I sit as chairman.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I will represent our caucus.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Johnston, Mr. Jackson and Mr. Reycraft as vice-chairman. Agreed?

Mr. Jackson: We have never met before.

Madam Chairman: Moving right along, we have a committee budget.

Mr. Jackson: According to this, we can get as far as Bronte this year.

Mr. Keyes: That is one of the first things I would like to address, and perhaps it is included. It appears as though there will be allowance for travel of only four days and then one week. It looks like a week and four days, almost two weeks. Is that what is there? I am really wondering if that is sufficient.

Madam Chairman: My interpretation is that refers to members' travel for the two days only—today and tomorrow—of organization. This budget is, I think, relatively limited and only covers this week, today and tomorrow.

Mr. Keyes: I was just getting worried.

Clerk of the Committee: It is for this fiscal year.

Mr. Keyes: I see. I was getting very worried when I saw two days.

Madam Chairman: No, I suspect we will be substantially adding to our budget as we go into our sessions. Could I have a motion?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am wondering whether we are worth \$8,000 for two days' work a week. Anyway, that is another matter.

Mr. Keyes: It mostly goes to the administrative staff rather than committee members, other expenses.

I will move the budget on the understanding that this is just for the two-day meeting today and tomorrow and operational necessities.

Madam Chairman: That is correct. Could I have a motion?

Mr. Keyes: Yes, I so move.

Mr. Reycraft: Does it include the question for interpretation of the terms of reference?

Madam Chairman: Does that mean our individual bill—

Mr. Keyes: Hire a consultant in order to—

Mr. D. S. Cooke: That is miscellaneous.

Mr. Keyes: Yes.

Madam Chairman: All in agreement?

Mr. D. S. Cooke: What is catering and hospitality?

Madam Chairman: That will be tea and coffee. Nothing but the best, tea and coffee. So that is carried?

Well, that was the easy part of our meeting. Now we get into slightly meatier issues. Several weeks ago I requested from the research service that they prepare a summary of education issues for our reference simply to try to hone down some of the multitudinous topics so that we have a very productive discussion. Would you like to comment on this, Dr. Gardner?

Dr. Gardner: Thank you, Madam Chairman. I do not think I can say too much more beyond that. We have tried to put together very much a scattergun type of approach to this list, all of the things that you might be interested in considering. The list is inevitably somewhat arbitrary in terms of the distinctions. We have tried to group things together that make some sense, but we have not in any sense attached any relative importance to the different categories or to the different issues. Of course, in practice they are very much interconnected, but it was as an aid to your deliberations and nothing much beyond that.

Madam Chairman: I will mention that in a very informal subcommittee I did distribute this to the various caucuses, so I think you have all had a chance to look at it. Mr. Johnston, would you like to start off the forum this afternoon?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Sure, I would love to. Thank you very much. I guess I have to be looking at paper to get recognized now.

I will just make a few comments. The first should be to put, if I could, a few things on the record in terms of the mandate of the committee and how it has come about, and then perhaps to let you know some of our thoughts in the official opposition about the priorities we might choose from the long list.

The first thing I would say is that it is very disappointing to me that it has taken us this long to meet. I want to get that on the record. When, on November 3, we learned in the throne speech that again the Liberal government was going to be talking rhetorically about the importance of education and was again talking about the notion of a parliamentary role, a legislative role for us as members of the Legislature as well in this process, I was pleased with this. Looking back at

the comments of the Lieutenant Governor that day, it is important to look at the kinds of things that were being talked about there and the clarity of language which was being used in terms of what the government was going to try to achieve, compared with what we now have got to work with, given the rather Lucy-Goosey language of our mandate and referral.

I find it disappointing that, from about the next week on, I asked the minister to give me the terms of reference for the committee, where he thought the government wanted this committee to go and what use it is playing, given that it was talking about us in this kind of way: "As part of an ongoing effort to involve parents, teachers, administrators and legislators of all parties in the development of new initiatives," which had been listed above, "we will establish a select committee on education."

Therefore, my presumption was that the government would have us establish an agenda and then would want us as a select committee to play a role in that in terms of organizing legislators' time for comment, trying to bring the public in to have some say about those broad issue areas the government was talking about, and that we would get started on that, I presume, given that this was the first thing mentioned in the throne speech. The first substantive suggestion of where we were going was education, and the first major promise of action was the development of a select committee, and we would be doing that, I presumed, during this break.

1420

I bugged the minister several time before Christmas and never got any further than a promise that in the next week, the next week and the next week he would be coming forward with a mandate for this committee.

If you look at the things that are mentioned, there are some scary things in it and some things which, ideologically, I have difficulty with as part of an educational philosophy. The first thing is, "We must equip our children with skills, knowledge, creativity and entrepreneurial spirit." This is not what I ever thought the education system was particularly needed for. I thought this was part of the inherent nature of all good North American humans under Liberal philosophy—and Conservative philosophy, as far as that goes—that we just cannot stop ourselves from being entrepreneurs anyhow, and unless you are doing a lot to crush this through some sort of oppressive socialist measure, this would just flourish anyway. But at any rate, this was their opening paragraph.

It then talked about the renewed emphasis on the quality of children's education in their early years, greater consultation with parents, teachers and school boards, standards, provincial benchmarks for literacy, languages, mathematics, etc., developing more effective ways of measuring student achievement against these benchmarks, ensuring parents receive more detailed information, supporting the drive for higher standards, large school boards with resources to reduce the class size and then establishing us. One would have thought that from that we might have got some indication of where the government was going to go.

In January we knew that the Radwanski report was coming down. The minister, also having got the Radwanski report long before the rest of us, of course, came out with an amazing interview in the *Toronto Star* on January 18, which I think all members should have and read through, which clearly was based on—after you read Radwanski you will know—what Radwanski was saying and was a means of trying to blunt the attack on the system that he saw coming from Radwanski. He comes through with a number of amazing assertions around streaming and segregation in the school system, attacks on the Hall-Dennis report using the same language as Radwanski uses, interestingly enough, in his report, and he goes back to the testing notions and other things. Even then, in January, we still did not get any indication of when or how this select committee is going to be established. Of course it did not get established until the last day of the sitting in February.

The minister, interestingly enough, was quoted in January by the *Toronto Teachers' Federation* as saying—in fact, he was asked—"I understand that a select committee in education composed of all three parties has been set up"—he never denies that it has not been set up—and then he goes on to say that whatever it is we are dealing with will not get in the way of any initiatives that are under way.

The lack of planning, the lack of organization around this whole process of where we are going in terms of review of education I think is dumfounding. When I saw the first draft of our mandate in the week we came back in February 1988, I was absolutely shocked at the vagueness of it all and the lack of use of any language at all that would normally be used when discussing normal education issues in Ontario.

I do not know if members have that reference in front of them. You should have it in front of you, because when we then try to work out where

we are going to fit in all this it could create some problems for us. We are supposed to make our recommendations within one calendar year, which is fairly amazing, divided into categories. This is the kind of language that we are asked to deal with:

"In the first phase, the committee shall consider the role that the school system plays in a multicultural and multiracial society in the choices and objectives of students in transition to adulthood, including how the elementary and secondary school system can assist students in shaping and fulfilling career and work objectives, factors in an information society which influence the young adults' choices of educational and training options and society's perceptions of those choices and the role of parents...."

The language is just so incredibly vague. When we talk about a multicultural and multiracial society, are we talking about something like heritage languages? It would be really interesting if that notion, if that language might actually show itself up in this thing. Are we talking about discrimination? Are we talking about stereotyping? Are we talking about the kind of curriculum bias which we have seen in the past and which most boards have taken some action on and which the provincial government has taken some initiatives on? What are we talking about there, when we are talking about things like "transition to adulthood" and the wonderful phrase "factors in an information society which influence decision-making"?

It strikes me that when we know, as Bob neatly laid out for us, that there are 40 or 50 major hard issues to be tackled in the education system that we should be addressing as a government and as a legislative committee that was established, it is shocking to me that the government itself, given what it said in the throne speech about wanting us to be a major part of the process of involving other people out in the community, could not have given us a better idea of where it wanted us to go.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Sounds more like Sean than Chris.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That is a good point. It does have the past minister's sort of floweriness and lack of precision to it, less than it does what I consider Chris Ward's down-to-earth kind of nature.

Let us deal with some of these issues that are being raised here and why the ministry has not suggested this. Why does the word "funding" not show up in here? Why is it that what is at risk most in the whole system, if you talk to the

people who are administering the system and the teachers who are asked to teach in the system, the question of adequate funding for the system and appropriate bases for that funding, is not in here?

Why was there none of the language that we have seen in the past about the notion called governance and accountability of the school system and the decision-making within the school system as one of the concepts that might be involved?

The word "streaming," so much in use and vogue in both the minister's comments and Radwanski's comments, does not show up anywhere in our mandate in terms of what we are expected to deal with.

Questions of French-language instruction, I guess, have to get lumped into the notions of a multicultural and multiracial society, and that is the kind of precision that we can expect in terms of directing us in what we should be looking at.

The role of collective bargaining and what the future of collective bargaining is; the length of the school day—language that surely every parent out there can understand and every teacher is used to using should have been in this mandate.

New members are probably not as aware of the kinds of ads we have put into papers asking people to come before committees, but they usually make it very difficult for anybody outside the immediate group that is interested to understand why it is we are meeting anyhow, and here we have a mandate which we were given which is incredibly vague and so generalistic that you sort of expect that they want us to give them a report within one year of what we did on our summer holidays rather than any real analysis of what is going on in the education system.

Why was there no mention in here of the role of private schools? The Deputy Minister of Education, for heaven's sake, came through with a report before he was deputy around the role of private schools, and yet that language does not show up. Instead it is some very strange kind of language here about educational and training opportunities in both the public and private sectors, more in terms of linkages.

The whole role of special education and what is happening in special education is not mentioned anywhere in this.

Class size, the big promise of the Liberal government in the last election, is not mentioned as an issue that we should be looking at, and given the enormous problems that the government knows it is having in terms of implementing that promise, one would have thought perhaps that is one of the areas it might have liked a little

bit of feedback on through a legislative committee.

What is happening in terms of Bill 30 and the follow-up in terms of the transfer of properties and the difficult kinds of decisions we have placed on many communities in the province and the need for some legislative review? That is not mentioned anywhere in the list of things that have been talked about.

On standardized testing, I guess we could deduce from some of the language that they wanted us to look at that perhaps; but this again is something that the minister has used in speech after speech over the last few months in attacking the system, saying that we do not have enough standardized testing, either for diagnostic measurement or for the whole question of deciding whether somebody should move on or not, and it has not been dealt with.

The Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions guidelines: I do not know how many of you have teachers in your riding in text studies and other parts of the education system who are worried about the effects of OSIS on the school system, but it is not mentioned here. That whole major change which is so controversial has not been raised here. Literacy is raised, in its own way, but the question as to whether or not we as a government have made the right decision in putting the primary responsibility for literacy in the hands of the Ministry of Skills Development rather than in the hands of the Ministry of Education is not raised here.

1430

The whole role of who should be in control of deciding on the delivery of those kinds of programs is not there. All the kinds of things that Bob Gardner and Ann Porter have gone through and identified for us as real issues within the school system—the development of special schools, the academies and the other schools that are developing, partially to deal with Bill 30 in a back-handed way and partially to deal with trying to meet needs of competition with the private sector, are being raised.

Otto Jelinek's big attack on physical education is not raised anywhere in here, although we have heard from the government its praise for certain physical educational programs in the province. Sex education, the role of day care in the school system, both for unwed mothers in the school system and in terms of getting disadvantaged kids brought into the system earlier, are not raised here.

As somebody who has been here for nine years on April 5—too long by half, Mr. Furlong; you

are right, believe me—I find it amazing that we have such a vague mandate when the needs are so particular, as they can be identified by researchers, as they have been identified by the minister himself, as they have been identified by George Radwanski. The minister knew before he established this committee what Radwanski's recommendations were, and for some reason or another he does not ask us specifically to address Radwanski, although in veiled terms, again, many of the things Radwanski talks about can be worked into the kind of mandate that has been given.

My opening comment on this is to say that from our perspective, we have been left in a really difficult position. We have to muse here among ourselves about what is the major issue on the public agenda today that we should be addressing first this summer because the Ministry of Education was unwilling or unable to give the government House leader a more precise notion of what that ministry saw as our role.

I think we are going to have real trouble today and tomorrow coming up with where we want to start on this whole thing, because we have not been given any kind of idea of the government's direction that we should be pursuing, and that is unfortunate. We will come through with several recommendations ourselves, after we hear what other people are thinking about in terms of what we might put forward as our priorities, but it is dumfounding to me again that we have not had a better idea of what the government wants when the government, in the throne speech, specifically spoke about this select committee dealing with issues that were of importance to the government and that it wanted public involvement in.

Enough said. Those are a few opening, calm, reasoned comments that I would like to make before I get more perturbed as the afternoon goes on.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. I am sure after that long elucidation of the shortcomings of the mandate considered in Hansard, you will be extremely relieved to know that we will be working from the legislative research document. I look forward with bated breath to hearing what you and your caucus will be recommending in that regard.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: And you shall get it in precise detail, unlike what we were given to operate under.

Mr. Jackson: I too would like to put on the record those concerns which I expressed in two subcommittee meetings, which occurred unofficially with respect to these terms of reference. I

too am quite amazed, as is my caucus, that given the state of education in the province, we are given these kinds of guidelines—and I use the word “guidelines” very loosely—for this committee. It seems quite inappropriate to the problems and challenges facing education right now.

It is clear that the government did not set the agenda in education four years ago; another government did. That centred around the issue of dropouts and Bill 30; when the new government was elected, it inherited both those agendas. They were the two prominent agendas of the day. Actually, the government had established several others, but they were prominent. The government, in its wisdom, chose to completely disregard the Dryden report and proceeded to dismiss and fire him and to dissolve his youth commission.

With respect to Bill 30, it is apparent that, given the approach the government has taken in terms of interpreting Bill 30, there is considerable concern being expressed around this province about the government's interpretation of just what happened during that year and a half of complete focus on the issue of Bill 30. Of course, many things were neglected, in a way, by the then Minister of Education because of the prominent role that Bill 30 had. Therefore, there was some relief and appreciation when the minister made a clear statement that there would be a select committee on education that would assist the minister in providing a focus on the outstanding issues. They have been enunciated, in part, by my colleague, Mr. Johnston. These are in no priority ranking, but of course the Macdonald commission is an extremely serious matter, both to Metro Toronto, which gets hardly any grant moneys, and to small rural boards and separate boards which do not receive commercial assessment in terms of their funding base.

The Shapiro commission has been mentioned as another outstanding item with no reference here. There is an entire body of students in this province who are expecting some leadership and guidance from this government—which, incidentally, has been clearly on the record on most of these commissions with one position and now seems somewhat reluctant to establish a sense of priority for the new government.

Francophone education: as you know, there have been some concerns about implementation, and there may even be some court challenges. There has been the issue of the capital. I want to address capital. When I talk about capital for our school systems, I am talking about the buildings and the need for new buildings. The require-

ments out there are something in the order of \$1.7 billion.

We also have the issue which no one seems to want to talk about, and I think somebody had better start talking about it fairly soon, and that is maintaining the existing stock. We are getting more and more signals that the ministry is looking at all of the assets and potential assets of boards being directed towards new construction, and yet our buildings in Ontario are literally collapsing around our students. For this government not to be concerned about that, or to include that as a priority, is beyond me.

Many of the items in these terms of reference address some of the points raised in the Dryden report; even though it has now been three years since the government buried that report it seems to be resurfacing in part here. I do not know what kind of signal we are getting from the government.

The Dobell report is another document about continuing and adult education, which clearly is an issue for dropouts, or school phobics, or any number of citizens in society who no longer wish to be considered mainstream daily-enrolment students; and we are getting no clear message from the government in that regard.

The Radwanski report has been issued. Statements have already been made by this committee about the Radwanski report. I am very nervous, generally, about this committee dealing with the whole concept of society's perception of what we are doing in schools.

1440

I believe that Radwanski has undermined the basic principle of education in this province, because the number one challenge in education today is that we are not effectively communicating to the citizens the positive things that are going on in our schools. I think that for this committee in any way to participate in a similar approach to Radwanski would be doing a disservice to the educational community of this province.

I, for one, will be rather vocal if I sense that this exercise is turning into a political pacifier or, even worse, is used as an inflammatory to convince the public that the problems are so severe and the history of funding was so bad that in fact it may take this government 10 or 12 years to correct the damage of the previous 10. The education community certainly will not let you get away with it, and clearly, the members of this committee who have experience in education are probably not going to sit by and watch that happen. So I get very nervous about us, in the

terms of reference, responding to the perception component.

There are other items. With respect to the curriculum review, which really has not been mentioned here, some positive things have been going on in that area. In no way do I see in the terms of reference, even by implication, that the positive things that are going on currently under the direction of the new minister should be built upon and examined by this committee, and I certainly would like to do that.

The point has been raised about the one-year time frame. Of course it is impossible. If Radwanski took a year just to talk about drop-outs and then got involved in educational adventurism, and if Shapiro took almost two years just to deal with the question of private school funding, and if Macdonald took over two and a half years, for us to believe that we are going to be able to even scratch the surface in a meaningful way with these kinds of terms of reference I think we are deluding ourselves. Consultation would be virtually impossible, given the amounts of time I am led to believe we have at our disposal, and many of us in all three political parties have other extensive committee responsibilities.

There is no mention of funding. There is no mention of governance. There is not even mention of other government priorities which are related to this general term of reference.

The most obvious reference, of course, is day care and the effective use of schools and so on. These are items that are being addressed in a political forum, and I would be a little nervous that those political statements are not being addressed here; even to refer to the ones that may be made in the course of the year in which we are doing this work, but that is something we will never know until they are announced.

I guess generally my concern is that the issues are of such magnitude and of such importance and the demand for us to get working clearly and in a focused fashion on the most important issues in this province are so critical, that if the government believes that in any way the whole issue of education and its effectiveness can be somehow passed off as a political pacifier I think it will have missed the mark. In fact, the opposite will take place. We will have only enraged the public and the educational community to such an extent that we would in fact be contributing to the problems in our schools because we failed to deal with the agenda effectively.

For our part, we will be contributing those items which we think are of a priority nature and

we will enunciate our reasons. We recognize the minority position that both opposition parties hold on the committee, but that was not unknown to the minister at the time he struck his terms of reference. It is clear that in the last session the terms of reference would have been radically different from what they are today.

The challenge of course will be for the government, with that majority, to proceed in a direction which is in the best interests of education in this province and that our exercise of one year proves to be helpful and gives focus and due respect to the problems facing education in Ontario.

Madam Chairman: Before we proceed with Mr. Reycraft's comments, I want to make a point of clarification. In your brown kit, there is a listing of the mandate as contained in Hansard. Halfway down, when it is describing the second phase of the committee, it states, "and any other issues the committee may wish to consider." I asked for clarification from the clerk as to whether that related only to the second phase or to either phase. She has done her homework on this and come back and said that was to apply to both phases, so it really does not limit us in any way, shape or form to the second phase.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The one amendment I got through.

Mr. Reycraft: I have listened very carefully to the comments of both opposition critics and their criticism, most of which seems to be focused on the vagueness, the lack of specifics provided in the terms of reference. It occurs to me that had the ministry or the government House leader provided terms of reference which were very specific, the debate we would currently be conducting here would probably be about the things that were left out of it or the priorities that appeared to be established by such a list.

I am not bothered at all by the general nature of the terms of reference. In fact, I welcome the generality that is provided, the lack of specificity, because it allows this committee to determine its own agenda, to determine what it wants to look at. I agree with both critics that the number of issues which could be addressed by this committee is a very large one. Certainly, the list that has been put in front of us by Mr. Gardner covers some 11 or 12 pages, I believe, and lists many issues that are currently a source of controversy within the educational community.

I think we can select from that list—I hope we can—a small number of issues on which we can focus our attention, to try to explore what is behind these particular issues, to hear what

various groups and individuals feel about them and to take that information, debate it and come forward with some kind of positive recommendations which will in turn make the educational system in this province a better one.

The time frame provided in the terms of reference to do what is required there, I agree, is quite inadequate. I do not suggest for a minute that we could cover that territory in one year and come forward with recommendations that would address an area of that size. That knowledge, combined with my experience on another select committee in a previous Legislature, makes me think we will be going back to the House leaders to ask for additional time to sit beyond the one-year time frame, the one-year limit that has been provided for us.

Again, I welcome the opportunity to set our own agenda, to decide which issues we are going to explore. I think we should get on with the discussion of where we should first focus our attention rather than worrying about what is or is not in the terms of reference that have been provided for us.

Madam Chairman: In our very informal subcommittee meetings, I had asked that each caucus try to prioritize what it would like to discuss as our frame of reference. I had suggested that if each caucus could come forward with four suggestions, then we would try to operate from that and narrow that down. I do not know where you would like to start.

1450

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I start with a point of order, if I may, to establish that we are working on the same premises for a number of things. The first is that we do have the understanding that "and any other items" covers both the first and second elements of the mandate and that we have a consensus on that.

The other is that we do not look at the list which has been worked out by Bob Gardner as the ultimate and definitive list in either of two ways; that there might be other things we would wish to add as we learn more and as we go through the process; and second, that the kinds of groupings Mr. Gardner and Ms. Porter have tried to do are not seen to be mutually exclusive; that we understand that some things which may be down in an organizational structure of a student's life actually have curriculum implications and other kinds of implications; that we do not read this as saying that the only way we can deal with an issue—for example, class size—is under the administrative format put down, because it is also a collective bargaining issue and it is a

philosophy of education issue and a number of other categories.

All I want to be clear on, before we go too far in defining where we are going, is that we do not see this as more or less than what it is, that it is the first compilation of as many of the things which could be thought of as possible and put into some kinds of groupings for organizational terms, but not an absolutely exclusive framework for how we deal with these things. I just want to make sure we have a consensus on that, so we do not have debates about this later on.

Madam Chairman: That is certainly my understanding, that this was not meant to compartmentalize, but is a starting point for discussion so we could perhaps be very productive in these two days of organizational meetings.

Mr. Jackson: One question I have is the issue of those items which, in the opinion of the ministry, should not be discussed at this time. I do not wish to suggest that there might be an embargo list.

For example, I listened very carefully on the issue of Bill 30, which is on the list for us to examine, and capital allocation, that is transfers. On the other hand, I read that the minister has indicated he would be unwilling to clarify or explain on the subject of the Goudge report, given the fact that the matter is now clearly going before the courts.

Are you concerned as chairman or do you have sufficient linkages so that items—I am not prepared to sit and debate for three hours on a point which the minister has indicated he would be unwilling to examine, or is not encouraging the government to examine, an item which is currently before the courts. There are several other examples. Prayer in school and the private school test are before the courts currently. There are several items, but this is one that just comes to mind. I think it is a legitimate question. I do not know what your working relationship, as the chairman, is on these points.

Madam Chairman: Certainly, as far as the minister is concerned, I have received no embargo. I did have a personal concern about Bill 30, though, because of the press reports that both Hamilton and Toronto intended to go to the courts with the matter. I asked the clerk what the precedent was in this matter and, basically, I understand it is just that if something is sub judice we have to be very careful, because we would not wish to appear to be influencing a judicial decision.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I do not think we should be so cautious that we leave whole areas out of

discussion if it were the desire of the committee to deal with them, because they may or may not be sub judice by the time we actually hold hearings. We must remember that we are not going to be holding meetings except when the House is not sitting and the timing of those things can be, in some cases, made fairly flexible if we have a range of things we are dealing with.

The other thing is that the advice you are getting from the clerk is correct. You can deal with things that are being dealt with by the courts, but you have to be careful about exactly how you deal with things. Some components of what you want to deal with you may not be able to raise in a public meeting and others you may.

If we did choose to go in that direction, it would probably be wise as we moved into that phase to have ourselves some legal advice as we tried to make those decisions. We should not necessarily rule out whole areas that may or may not be sub judice from time to time. For instance, I think about the issue of French-language education, which was sub judice for a long time. It would be a mistake if issues of that sort could not be dealt with at all in theoretical terms by a committee of the Legislature because there was an appeal on a particular aspect of existing law, at the federal level in that case. I would just say you always have to be careful, but you do not have to be absolutely rigid about these things.

Madam Chairman: Are there any other comments on that?

Mrs. O'Neill: On the whole question of the Bill 30 implementation, which I presume is where Hamilton fits into all this, as you know there are structures that exist that were set up by the legislation, the planning and implementation commission. Personally, I would find it very difficult to start examining decisions or directions of that commission. If we want to discuss the processes or the mandate of it, that is a different thing, but if we start getting involved in actual situations where we have given that commission power, direction and a set of guidelines, I would really find it very difficult—let alone the court challenges—to interfere in their work if they are an existing commission.

As I say, if it is an examination of what they are doing and the processes they are using, that is a different thing, but on their actual decision-making, which they are doing on a day-to-day basis—this is their work and they are working in various communities—I would not want to see this committee tend to come in or even provide an avenue to end-run a group that we have given a certain mandate to.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: We are sort of jumping ahead of ourselves, but because I did want to put Bill 30 down as one of the three issues I wanted to have the committee raise, I might as well do it in that context now. There are several issues that I think are linked and should be looked at by the committee.

As somebody who chaired the standing committee on social development during the period when we held the hearings on Catholic school funding, together with Mr. Reycraft, Mr. Jackson and Mr. Cooke, I witnessed the immense hostility out there in the community, much of which was based on the process of exclusion that a lot of people felt about the decision, as much as they did about the merits of the issue.

I suggest there are times when it is very important to have legislative review and my sense is that we are now moving to one of those stages. The distinctions I would make are a little different from Mrs. O'Neill's in terms of what we should deal with. If we were meeting in the summer and the courts were still dealing with the Hamilton situation, I would suggest to you that this committee probably should rightfully make a decision not to deal with the Hamilton example. That would probably be wise.

Presumably, we will get legal advice that will tell us that would be wise, but to say that we, as a legislative committee of the Legislature which established the PIC—or confirmed its establishment before by fiat—should not have the right to review its decisions, is wrong. We must have the right to do that. You do not do it for the sake of second-guessing a decision. You do it, I hope, for the sake of looking at what the process was that we established and whether it is meeting the needs we were looking for as a Legislature as we passed Bill 30.

Frankly, at this stage, my concerns are not to do with the PIC's approach to things and its attempts to mediate and to assist the sides to come up with some good solutions. My problems come down to what I see at the moment as a flaw in terms of the process for resolution that we established. First, we put all the onus on local representation making the decisions. There was a consensus on the committee that local people should try to come up with solutions to suit their own communities wherever possible; then we allowed mediation and then arbitration.

Unfortunately, at the same time as we developed that process, we also—this is like saying we as a government not we as a committee—made it very clear that there would

be no major influx of money to assist with questions of accommodation, of transfers or of major capital that might be involved in even trying to accommodate sharing; that the minister, at that time Mr. Conway, was opposed to that kind of money being put in and that people were going to have to do it within the resources that were within the community and like it or lump it.

1500

I think that hard line has caused some real problems. The government had no room to move in during the mediation period to play a creative role in trying to change the formula upon which decisions were made, to try to find out exactly what would sweeten the pot, which in my view is necessary to make both sides feel they are winners and not that they are losing, or that one side is losing in a situation.

As a result, when it went to arbitration, they left an arbitrator with absolutely no room to move either. All he could do is what Goudge did; no, two things: he could make one side a clear winner and one side a clear loser on what he saw was a fair judgement; or he could do what Goudge did, which in my view was to try to make both sides lose somewhat and to again put the pressure back on making a local decision and not go through mediation and arbitration. He could not say, "What will solve it"—Hamilton is not a good example for this perhaps—"in this community is building a new school here for the public board."

Mr. Jackson: He made a reference to it—page 7.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Yes, but he had no means of doing that. He had no means of committing government involvement in that area.

Mr. Jackson: But he did recommend.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That whole notion of the process is the only one we really need to look at. Lately, the point I have been trying to make publicly is that I do not think the upholding of the Goudge decision—the government had to do it by that stage; you cannot cut down your own arbitrator's decision—that the results of that are going to be as positive as the government thinks they are going to be, for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that you have this very difficult squeeze being put on the boards during their election year.

If you think about yourself trying to get re-elected in a year when you are shutting down services in your own community, as public boards are being asked to do, to give up schools in their own community during election year,

you can see how impossible that is going to make the situation unless some kind of leverage can be put in to make the public boards look like they are winning by this system as well.

For that reason, I think an analysis of what has happened, of why certain decisions have worked and why certain local communities have come up with decisions that have met local community needs, whereas others have come to impasses and are about to come to major impasses from all we can see, is a very important thing for this committee to be dealing with.

I would put it down as one of the three major issues that we, as a committee, should be looking at in the next little while. If we think the political heat was tough when the idea was first promulgated and then brought in, with as bad a process as was involved then, I just tell you, you ain't seen nothing yet compared with what is going to come down on our heads and on the government's head afterwards. I think it is in the government's self-interest to involve itself through a bit of a buffer like a legislative committee to deal with that issue and to bring people in to see if there are some changes in process that can be brought about. In that context, I would say looking at PIC's decisions and its role and how it has helped in some areas and not been able to do something in other areas would be a very good thing for us to look at.

Mr. Jackson: I am having difficulty with Mrs. O'Neill's thesis that if something is in place, in so many words if it is operational and there is a mandate and it is place, our role is not to examine it. I think all elements of education are being mentioned in both the terms of reference and in legislative research's guidelines. We are going to be tripping over all sorts of processes and systems that are in place. Bill 30, as I said from the outset, is no different from a dozen other items that are before the courts or under political consideration at the moment.

To follow on Mr. Johnston's comments, why Bill 30, as it relates to capital, is on the Progressive Conservative Party's list is very simply because there were processes that were recommended. Our caucus tabled nine specific amendments which were quite different from the legislation we are now faced with. We had a model that was built around public consultation, using education programs and effectiveness as the terms by which we were able to approach the community and say: "Look, we cannot provide a viable program in this school. It is now a community capital resource. What do we do because of that?"

The New Democratic Party and the Liberals in their wisdom voted against those amendments. I do not see this as an opportunity to re-introduce them. I simply think that, in a nonpartisan atmosphere, we should be examining some of the options; which were widely supported, incidentally, at the time by the education community but not in the judgement of the politicians who sat on that committee.

I think there is merit in looking at that before there are further inflammatory and unnecessary divisions and misunderstandings about this bill. Certainly, we have equal representation on this committee from the three political parties that spent a year and a half working on that bill. We are represented on this committee. I do not think it is something we should shy away from, especially in light of the concerns that are being expressed about it.

I for one would not support the thesis that we should be shying away from these items, given that the processes should not be reviewed because they are existing processes currently operational with legislative mandates.

Mrs. O'Neill: Either the two gentlemen who have just spoken do not listen as intently to me as I do to them or else they cannot understand what I have said, because I think what I said was almost identical to what Mr. Johnston said. What I said I did not want to engage in—and I really cannot see how I can back off—that I did not believe in, was this becoming an appeal process for decisions that have just been made by the planning and implementation commission or are in the process of being made by it.

Mr. Jackson: We all agree on that.

Mrs. O'Neill: That is all I said. I said "processes" at least three times in my statements and I am sure Hansard will prove that. I have no trouble examining it, but I think it is most unfair to the individuals who are serving on PIC to think that, because this committee has now been struck, they cannot continue their work effectively in the communities, particularly at this crucial moment when I know there are some successes on the verge and there are also, of course, some trouble spots of which I am aware.

All I said was, "Let us not make this an appeal procedure environment," but I do think there are some things in the implementation of Bill 30 that have to be examined, some kinds of understandings that have to be interpreted, occupancy rates and such things as that. I think it would do all communities a service, but I certainly do not think that you have tried to understand what I was saying.

I feel we have to be supportive of the good things that are happening and examine those places where the implementation of this bill has caused some confusion, misunderstanding and weaknesses.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: It sounds as if we are coming around to a consensus that we can deal with Bill 30, and I think that would be appropriate. I would hope one of the points that we would look at in detail and recommend in detail with regard to Bill 30 is the whole issue of equity of funding for the two publicly funded school systems.

I do not think that a select committee on education looking at the future of our educational system or philosophy could possibly appropriately and thoroughly deal with the issue without looking at the reality that the separate school board is not equitably funded at this point, because it does not have access to commercial and industrial assessment in Ontario to the same degree as the public school boards. As a result, it cannot offer the range of programs the public school system can. Until that issue is dealt with, I do not think we can, as a Legislature, believe that the work or the principle that we all endorsed of extension of funding has been accomplished in Ontario.

I think the whole area of funding, the Macdonald report, Bill 30 and the lack of equity in funding at this point are some things that this committee should address very quickly. If the minister is intending to make announcements in response to the Macdonald commission finally this spring at some point, that is fine as well. We as a committee could accept that announcement and receive public input on both our ideas, as well as the government's ideas through the Minister of Education's proposals.

1510

I have met with our school boards locally in my home community. I knew the situation was bad, but I did not realize that it was nearly as bad as it is in terms of the implications for the low percentage of government funding—much less than the 60 per cent—and in terms of the spending ceilings; the fact that every school board spends over the spending ceilings and this has to be picked up 100 per cent by property taxpayers; and the incredible difficulties that the Catholic school boards have at this point. We have to deal with that as a committee if we are to deal with one of the major issues facing the educational system at this point.

Madam Chairman: You may be somewhat optimistic in thinking that a consensus has been

reached on that so early. I guess just as chairman I would like to say that the difficulty I see in chairing a session on Bill 30 is that first of all it may well be before the courts, and in my viewpoint it would be very difficult for me to chair that.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Bill 30 is not before the courts.

Madam Chairman: No, not Bill 30; but you were talking about looking at the process, were you not?

Mr. Jackson: I will get you a copy of the Vanstone release. It is really a very narrow section of one piece of the bill. This process is not in question.

Madam Chairman: I think it might be very difficult to continually be cautioning people. If you are right in that you do not want to go into an appeal of the decisions made, if you are right in that any matters before the court cannot be discussed, it just—I am not saying it is impossible; I am just saying—

Mr. D. S. Cooke: That would only mean that the Hamilton decision cannot be discussed.

Madam Chairman: But Toronto is also—

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Toronto is not in front of the courts.

Madam Chairman: Ann Vanstone has said that she intends to take it to the Supreme Court.

Mr. Jackson: She may not be a trustee in six months.

Madam Chairman: She may decide to take it further.

Interjection.

Madam Chairman: I am sure with great sympathy, now that you have heard that, you will decide that to make life easy for me you will not bring it up.

Mr. Mahoney: My concern with the suggestion that we spend a lot of time talking about Bill 30 is that we are getting away from what I had hoped this committee would be working on; that is, to try to deal with the quality of education for our young people and the product that is coming out the bottom end of the school system.

I recognize fully that any of the issues we talk about are going to revolve around funding of one type or another, whether it is capital or program or whatever, or even to a degree the dispute that has been caused by Bill 30. But I would think it very counterproductive for us to spend a great deal of time opening old wounds and dealing with the very real problems that occurred in the

community with the implementation of Bill 30. I frankly think it is history.

There may be some suggestions that either of the opposition parties might want to put forward that might improve certain areas of implementation for the future and that kind of thing. I do not have a great deal of trouble with that. But it seems to me if you do read the terms of reference, which I might agree are rather broad and vague, they at least deal with such comments as the "fulfilling career and work objectives" of the students and how you integrate the student from the educational system into the workplace. Frankly, both phases of the committee, in my view, tend to work towards that.

So in my humble opinion, what I would like to see us concentrating on a lot more—

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Humble?

Mr. Mahoney: Yes, I am quite humble, especially when education comes into it. What we should be concentrating on a lot more than the fuels of past fires and problems such as Bill 30 is how we are going to make recommendations that would lead to improving the education system for the young people who are in it.

It seems to me that the research document that is before us goes through an awful lot of that with the education philosophy. I certainly think that the funding issue has a major role to play in that regard. It is hard for a student to learn if he does not have proper facilities to learn in. Mr. Jackson can slough off the lack of funding in the last 10 years if he wishes, but the reality is that the problem was not created in the last two or three years and it is something that we have to try to solve over a little longer period of time than the next six or 12 months, obviously.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: How long do you want?

Mr. Mahoney: In fact, I was going to suggest that it might be helpful to get some constructive suggestions from our friends to suggest what kind of a specific time frame would be involved and the dollars. Frankly, I have not heard that, but I would love to hear it. Then we could debate something constructive and talk some common sense rather than fighting over spilled beans, so to speak, in the issue of Bill 30. I would tend to agree with you that it would be counterproductive for this committee to deal with issues like Bill 30 or, frankly, even the 60 per cent funding issue.

Whatever issues we deal with, when you come down to curriculum, when you come down to programs in the schools, there are going to be funding implications. I think Mr. Johnston said that in his opening remarks, and I quite agree, but

I would be opposed to us wasting a lot of time on Bill 30.

Mr. Keyes: It was mentioned earlier that we are balanced on the basis of people who have sat on select committees, having one from each of the three parties, which I appreciate, and I know we will be looking to those people for a great deal of leadership. This personally is my first opportunity ever to sit on a select committee, so I have not learned the routine of select committees, but I am starting to pick up a few trends very early in today's meeting. I hope that those trends are only the superficial ones that are necessary by political philosophies you see and that eventually, when we get them out of the way, we will get down to the business for which we are here.

I would be the first to admit that certainly the combined time of members of the Legislature sitting opposite far outranks that of the people sitting on this side of the room, but I would suggest that time spent in the educational field as parents, as trustees and as teachers is certainly equal to or perhaps far in excess of the other side, so I think we have a lot of balances here that can be brought to bear in a very meaningful discussion over the next weeks or months that we will be involved with this.

Contrary to both of the other critics, I really welcome this very fine motion. In fact, I thought it might win the Nobel prize for literature, it was so eloquently spelled out.

Mr. Jackson: I believe Sean has submitted it.

Mr. Keyes: I welcomed it because it allows us the opportunity that quite often you do not get when you are handed a committee responsibility like the one on insurance, which left us fairly restricted as to what we were studying. Now we can study any of those things that we think are in the best interests of providing a better educational opportunity for the young people of this province so that we can continue to lead Canada in what we do, from the standpoint of education and the development of young people, to keep us in the economic forefront as well in Canada, and not only Canada.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: How do you know we are going there?

Mr. Keyes: Now we know where we are coming from.

I think that in a spirit of co-operation between the people who are going to sit here, we will produce, in my estimation and hope, some documents over the next year or years—which I tend to look at—that will really provide some great insight and opportunities for people.

I think what we have to do as a committee is provide the opportunity for a lot of public input from those people who over the last good number of years have been expressing a lot of concerns about our educational system, and that has to include a group that no one has mentioned at the moment, the students themselves who have been through the system and who are currently in the system. I think we have to provide them with an opportunity to have something to say. They really never do. Then, of course, the parents next, who are probably the group that we all come upon which is, by and large, maybe the most frustrated by the system. Then it is the trustees; then labour, business and industry—to see the role they must play in providing what is here talked about as a meaningful education so they can “assist students in shaping and fulfilling career and work objectives.”

1520

We must also, though, keep in mind that the scope of what we are going to deal with here over the next months and years has to be something that is capable of being dealt with in a reasonable period of time. I believe that can be done by spending some time today and tomorrow and then throwing out those areas that are considered to be of interest and seeing if we can come up with some.

We have spent, I think, sufficient time on Bill 30 at the moment. It is obvious some people want to see some aspect of that included, but I really believe what we should now be doing is trying to say, “What are those areas in education today that we hear most about from parents, students and the like and that we should be dealing with?” and then, “How many of those can we deal with in a reasonable time frame?”

I would even throw out a suggestion that we should look at this committee as not necessarily reporting within one calendar year, as it is here, but maybe in an ongoing way, that it may last two or three years and do some interim reporting on particular areas of interest. I am sure the opposition would like to carry it on for three years, right into the next election campaign. But let us do something that shows we are dealing with certain issues, perhaps an interim report to the House, and get before us those areas that we all feel are kind of our private or personal hobby-horses, about which we want to hear from the general public.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Keyes. Mr. Johnston, I think you had your hand up.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Yes, I have a couple of things. I want to give you our list of three items

we have come up with. The first is that I do not have any problem with there being general categories for us to deal with as a mandate. I would like there to be ones using language I can understand. Unfortunately, the only clear language in there, in my view, are the words restricting our travel, “in Canada.” It is unfortunate that the government had to be so precise there and so imprecise elsewhere.

Mr. Reycraft: There is always hope it may include the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Exactly. I think in the need for a manifest destiny Canada is clearly coming along.

Mr. Jackson: We could check out the armed services schools in Europe.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I would not agree with one other thing, though, that Ken said. I think we all agree that we can make a report, that we can make some practical suggestions, that we can be seen to be something which does not just produce tomes that never get used but also in fact is dealing with issues that are current and of concern and can be of assistance in practical dealings with a committee that will be meeting for periods of four or six weeks at a time, when it does meet with those kinds of limitations on it. I think that is one of the factors we have to keep in mind as we produce our priorities.

If we were to ever have had a steering committee meeting, if that were ever to have occurred, I think one of the things that would have been understood would have been that it is going to be very difficult for us today or tomorrow to make decisions as a committee that will not have been back before our caucuses, when you consider the scope of either what the puffery tells us we can deal with or the hard list that Bob and Ann have produced tells us we should be looking at.

I think that no matter what we debate in the next day or two, we are going to have to take that to our caucuses and then ask for permission to meet quickly when the House returns so that we can get some kind of message out to the educational community before the end of April about what we intend to do during the summer and when we intend to do it and give lots of advance notice about how they can participate. The process will be for naught if we do not get it out before that time.

The three areas we want to deal with are all linked, and no doubt we will find opposition for each. I will put them forward. The first you have already heard about. We will come back to more argument about why you cannot not deal with

Bill 30 at this time and why we think Bill 30 must be on it.

I also think the whole funding issue—David started to talk about it, and I was not sure if you understood that as one of our major issues as well—the funding of education, the adequacy of funding of education, the formula for funding of education, etc. We believe that you cannot really deal with any of these other issues until we have dealt with that because the questions begged are often questions of inadequate apportionments. Even the issues of governance are based on how funding is arrived at and that kind of thing. So we see those two areas as being important.

I think it would be very helpful to the committee if the minister does in the next month or two what he said he was going to do when I talked to him in December the last time—or maybe even in January; I cannot remember. He is going to make some kind of statement of a proposed direction, not a definitive government policy but an inclination of where the government might go as a response to Macdonald. If he did that, I think this might be a very good forum for discussion of finance. If not, then it is going to be up to us to do our own analysis of Macdonald and the other implications coming out of educational funding.

The third thing—and I already know from discussions with Mr. Jackson and from some of the things he said in his opening remarks that he probably does not agree with this from his perspective—is that I just do not see how we can not deal with Radwanski's report, or if not with the report with some of the underpinnings of what Radwanski is talking about in the next little while.

I guess we could just let this slide by and let the government get reactions from the educational community and deal with it as it chooses to, probably gathering dust because of the opposition to it, which I have found is very widespread out there in the educational community, but I am not sure that would be doing what the government stated it wanted us to do. In the development of new initiatives, it wanted us to be the participants, in terms of the throne speech, by bringing the public in to talk about ideas.

I find many contradictions in Radwanski, and any of you who have heard any of the things I have said publicly about it will know that I have some serious problems with the solutions that he finds. But I find some of the analysis to be very provoking and interesting. I think some of the issues raised are of crucial interest to parties like mine and to individuals like me in terms of this

question which Mr. Mahoney raised about equality of education and equality of outcomes of education, given what happens to disadvantaged children in our society. We know what takes place and how the education system has not served to give them the upward mobility that we presumed it would.

I think from that perspective there are issues that are not part of what I would call the public discourse at this time that really need to be part of it if we are really going to rethink where education is going. I know there are all sorts of educational professionals who believe that the streaming issue is an open-and-shut case one way or the other. They are either for getting rid of it all, as Radwanski is, because of what is done in terms of kids from poor families and other disadvantaged groups; but there are others who are very strongly committed to its being maintained because it is the only form of grouping which allows those kids some sort of a chance.

But I do not think it is part of the public discourse in terms of the general public and certainly not in terms of the legislators here, whether the way we have streamed kids into the secondary level has been appropriate, whether it has been counterproductive, whether it has aided mobility, whether it has increased the drop-out rate or actually held the drop-out rate lower than it might have been, whether the course work that we have for that kind of streaming is adequate or whether business thinks that the kind of graduates who are coming out of low-streamed courses are being trained appropriately to their needs.

I do not think all of those kinds of things are part of the public discussion as yet, and if there is one thing that is useful about what Radwanski has done, in my view it is that because of the profile that the report got he has actually insinuated that issue into public discourse.

I would just hate to see those notions dropped, because as you know, personally and also as the mandate of our party in terms of the concentration I have had on poverty issues over the last seven or eight years in the Legislature, I have been totally frustrated by the sense that no matter what social welfare programs we have put in place, no matter that we seem to have a very broadly funded public system of education, people who are poor or people who have other kinds of disadvantages, whether it is not having English as a first language or whether it is isolation or other kinds of things, or a handicap of one kind or another, tend to be not well served by the education system and tend to be marginalized in our society.

1530

From my perspective, we finally have somebody who, in a public document, is addressing the issue. I am not exactly overwhelmed by the solutions, but it is analysing the issue and saying this is an important issue for us to look at. I think it would only be appropriate for a committee like ours to spend some time, early in its time, looking at some of the philosophical concerns which are raised. That whole issue of whether people from different social strata, people with different kinds of abilities, are getting a fair shake out of our education system and are getting the same kind of outcomes from the education system we would expect for kids who are more affluent or have other kinds of advantages, is something I and my party would really like to see dealt with soon.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Jackson, would you like to present your shopping list at this time?

Mr. Jackson: No, not at this time. While I was talking with Mr. Reycraft we had expressed some concerns about one or two of the items being mentioned. If I might, I would like to yield to him and find out what the other items are and see which areas of consensus we do have.

Mr. Reycraft: We have identified four different areas we would put forward for consideration by the committee, areas we would like to see addressed.

The first, according to the classification list that Bob and Ann made available to us, comes under the title of organization of education process. It is certainly consistent with what Mr. Johnston has talked about to some degree, in that it addresses the streaming issue. It also talks about the use of standardized tests and another matter mentioned in Mr. Radwanski's report, grade promotion, Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions curriculum guidelines, semestering; and a final item, the length of the school day: all those under that broad category of organization of education process.

The second issue we would put forward came under the administration umbrella. We talk there about planning, both short-term and long-term, not only at the ministry level but also at the board level and even at the individual school level; about board-school relations; about school administration, and that includes the role of principals and vice-principals, including their position within the bargaining unit, a matter that got some review by the standing committee on general government last year as part of its overall review of the School Boards and Teachers Collective Negotiations Act; the role of supervi-

sors within the school and about hiring and promotion policies; last under that title, school and community-parent relations.

The third area we have identified is—we use the term “technical education.” That includes a number of things that fall into the category of technological studies, including vocational and technical programs, commercial programs, the interface with community colleges. It would include a look at apprenticeships and how they are being (a) made available, and (b) being utilized within the province at the present; and about skill acquisition within that technical education category.

There is certainly a large number of educators in the province who are concerned about the continuing decline in enrolment in technical education. At the same time, we have an increase in the number of highly skilled and technical jobs available in the province which are going unfilled, unmet, by people from within this province. There is a shortage in many skilled trade areas and, at the same time, we have this decline in student enrolment in technological studies.

The final point we wanted to put forward was that of teacher effectiveness. I think this is addressed in the report as well, but it would include class size and composition, conditions in learning environment, teacher effectiveness and approaches, support that is required by teachers, teacher-student relations and the collective bargaining process as well. It is those four rather general issues that we would like to put before the committee for its consideration.

Mr. Jackson: We have already set out, for the record, the specific concerns with respect to Bill 30, given the transfers and effective use and calculation of spaces, that whole general area, and the manner in which the current legislation addresses the point of locally determined solutions, where it helps it or does not help it. That is an item—we do not rank ours, but we have four anyway.

One of the reasons for four is because very close to that is the whole issue of the capital, new and replacement, which is separate and distinct from transfer. As I have mentioned, that is about some of our window replacement programs that are nonexistent, and roof replacement programs. Literally some of these facilities are disintegrating around us. I think it is very important that somehow we look at that whole area and determine whether or not—we could also expand that to talk about the permanent nature of

portables and some of the environmental concerns that have been raised around those.

Another area is the issue of funding which has been raised, which strikes at the heart of the Macdonald commission. The equity, and I endorse the comments made by Mr. Cooke, but also with respect to the funding for northern Ontario boards, which is an area of concern and an examination of how the elaborate labyrinth of grant programs in Ontario addresses the unique needs of the north.

A final item is broadly based. Upon reflection, perhaps I am not too far from what Mr. Johnston suggests when I refer to educational philosophy, which is the subset. Although our party is not supposed to be getting into discussions of philosophy, I think it is important that we understand the goals for education and what various approaches we are going to take to teaching in this province.

I think that overview question strikes more at the heart of Radwanski than to pull apart one small item, such as streaming, or the semestering approach, or whatever. If, in fact—and I listened to Radwanski very carefully, and the minister—we are making recommendations for a system that will suit us well into the 21st century, then clearly we have to resolve what it is we expect of education. We have to understand that, if we are to have an effective journey, we certainly have to have clearly in mind where our destination is. I sense that if the government's real agenda is to strike a new course, then clearly we have to address where we want to end up.

If I were asked to expand what I mean by educational philosophy, I am sure I am not too far from some of the specific points raised by Mr. Reyecraft and as well by Mr. Johnston, when they addressed the Radwanski program. Some of the points about teacher effectiveness and content of education would not escape an overall question about what we are teaching in schools, why we are teaching it, and what we expect education in Ontario to achieve for our citizens.

Mr. Chairman: When we were originally talking about the meeting today, Mr. Johnston indicated he had no problem with sitting rather later than is the norm for committees. If that is the will of the committee, I would suggest we take a 10-minute break right now.

1540

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am wondering if I might just make a couple of comments right at the moment. We had no idea what would come up this afternoon and what people's lists were going to look like. It strikes me that with some thought

there can be a coalescing of some of the ideas that are here from all three parties. I am not sure it will necessarily just come out in a straight discussion back and forth this time. It may be that some reflection and a few discussions among the parties would be useful and then we can come back tomorrow and try to hammer out the priorities.

It looks to me, just in very general terms, if I can put this, that we might easily be able to come up with something which embodies the expression of philosophy and goals, along with some of the processes of education that are on both Mr. Reyecraft's list and mine; just with some shifting around of things we might be able to try to work out some order to it.

I guess what I am fishing for is that we might want a bit more discussion now and, rather than trying to go late tonight, basically have a chance to talk among ourselves a little bit and see if, before we sit down tomorrow, we might be able to come up with some solutions for setting down our priorities, one, two, three, on what we might want to go with first. That might shorten our discussion tomorrow and make it easier for us to come up with some decisions than I thought it was going to be—I thought it was going to be much tougher to develop some priority than it looks like it might be.

Madam Chairman: One thing I would ask before we go on: Mr. Jackson mentioned that his list was in no particular order of priority. Would you say the same for yours, Mr. Johnston?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I see them all as being linked, as I said. I do not see how we can deal with many of the issues we are talking about without the issue of funding coming up as we deal with them, although that is not dealing with the principle of how you raise taxes and that kind of thing, clearly. I think that Bill 30 discussions will also be raised when people from the different systems come back and say, "Well, look, you can deal with this kind of a problem—streaming or whatever—but, in our system, because of the lack of resources we have, we effectively cannot develop a vocation stream." The Catholic system might say that in a certain area, and that kind of thing. I would not want to, at this stage, say which of mine are the highest priority. I would rather sit down now and try to work out how we might meld the three parties' approaches and see if we can set up, by tomorrow morning, some kind of an acceptable order.

We might go on and then have our discussion about that and, more important, tomorrow morning, on some reflection, what we are going

to need from research before we can enter into that kind of discussion, as well as when we would meet again.

Mrs. O'Neill: I am very happy to hear what Mr. Johnston is saying because, when he presented his three priorities, I had a lot of difficulty with subjects sort of in isolation such as Bill 30 and the funding of education. You sat on the committee that received all of the input on Bill 30. I was on the other end of those things at that time, and I know the kinds of time and money that individual boards, let alone trustee and teacher associations, put into that.

You said earlier that two and a half years were spent on the Macdonald report. I was also on the other side of the table from legislators on that one. I have difficulty with putting those down as subjects that we would be receiving input on in a rather isolated way. We know that the funding of education and, I think, 20 of the Macdonald report recommendations have already been begun. We also know, and I am sure the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward) has told you, there is a lot of work being done on these other items. It is not going to happen overnight.

But I am happy to hear Mr. Johnston's new approach of expecting input on Bill 30 and the funding of education from the broader subject areas that are more student oriented. My fear, if we put out on our little ad—whatever we put across the province—"Bill 30, problems of implementation," or however we word it, or "Funding of education"—and somebody used the words "inadequate apportionment," which of course is now going to be solved, I hope, after the Nepean announcement and what falls under that—I find it very confining.

Again, you are going to be talking to the same people who made the representations over the last two and a half to three years. I think if we want input from new groups such as Mr. Keyes mentioned, we should hope that these will come in by way of a much broader student-oriented approach and that we appear to the communities we are going to hear from as interested in students. I hope and I think all three parties have that as their prime objective.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: As a former trustee, I can say you sound like a former trustee.

Mrs. O'Neill: I cannot deny my background.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I do not mind anyone using all the language, "We care about the students," and all the rest of it. We do, obviously, or we would not want to serve on this committee. But I hope, whatever the process is, that when we write our report, we come up with a practical

report. I do not want to write some report that deals with philosophy and ideals, or meet over three or four years and write a great report that 20 years from now we can pick up and say: "Look what I did when I was in the Ontario Legislature. No one ever implemented any of the recommendations anyway."

I guess that is why I would like to see something like one of the four areas that we deal with be very specific on Bill 30. It is new, it is something where we are experiencing great difficulties in implementation and where the committee could be very helpful in recommending solutions to the problems, not reconsidering the decision of whether or not there should be extension or the idea of umbrella boards as opposed to a separate board and a Catholic public board and the other public board.

That is not what we are interested in discussing, but we are interested in looking at the specific problems that every board, every jurisdiction, every region of this province is experiencing as a result of Bill 30, things that we could not anticipate as members of the committee and things that the government did not anticipate or Premier Davis certainly did not anticipate when the announcement was made, but things that we can now see are major problems. I think we could have a very positive impact in making practical recommendations as to how they can be dealt with.

If you think we are going to go through this process—and if we followed Mr. Reycraft's suggestions, most of which I do not have a lot of problems with—and Bill 30 is not going to come up, it is going to come up under every single one of these. We cannot talk about technical education without the reality of—

Mrs. O'Neill: That is exactly what I said. Boy, I hate being misunderstood.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I think I understand you, but I think the difficulty is that you do not want to deal up front with the problems of Bill 30.

Mrs. O'Neill: I am a very up-front, detailed person.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I think it would be much more appropriate and much more helpful to deal up front and say that one of the things we are going to deal with is Bill 30, in addition to two or three other areas, rather than talking about teacher effectiveness. It is great, let us talk about teacher effectiveness, but we cannot talk about any of these things without a section that talks about funding.

There is no bloody way that the property taxpayers of this province are going to be picking

up more of the government's ideas of what should be done in education across the province. They cannot afford it. So let us be up front and talk about funding. Let us not write a 400-page or 500-page report with lots of recommendations and then let the property taxpayers pick up the cost of implementing it.

That is what has happened over the years. If that is the kind of process we are going to go through and we are going to avoid some of the major issues, funding being one of them, then let us forget it now. Let us pack it in now. Let us just let Chris Ward and the government make the decisions and tell the committee to stay out of it from day one.

Madam Chairman: Just before we go to Mrs. O'Neill, Mr. Johnston, can I have a point of clarification?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am sure my hand was up before hers.

Madam Chairman: I am sorry. I thought you were scratching your head.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I have scratched it since several times. What would you like to know?

1550

Madam Chairman: When you were talking about the separate school transfers in Bill 30, you mentioned that you could understand the need for caution in bringing it up if it was under judicial review and that perhaps it would be better to wait till a later phase in which to discuss it. Is that accurate?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: No, sorry. I know you wanted to be, but everybody is reading things into what people are saying.

Madam Chairman: Could you clarify what you said, then?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I seem to have got that with Mrs. O'Neill before, and she certainly has done it with me since; and now you are, I think, projecting your desire not to have to deal with some of the problems that there are sometimes in the chair when we are dealing with Bill 30.

But no, I think the reason I was suggesting that we need a little bit of a break to sit back and discuss these things is that, in fact, what Mr. Cooke has said is more clearly my position in terms of how I would like to see things done. But all I was saying was that it is inevitable that other issues, like Catholic school funding, will come up when you are dealing with some of these other issues as well.

But I think there is the basis here, among the three parties' positions, for our coming up with the hierarchy of an order in which we would take

things, and I think if we get a little time on our own to try to work this out and come back tomorrow morning with it, we will probably be in a better position to do it than if we try to go ahead right now and pick each other's notions apart. That is all I was suggesting. But no, I do think that Bill 30 can be dealt with.

Madam Chairman: Just for clarification, I was referring to your comments much, much earlier, at the beginning of the day.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I know that, and Bill 30, I do think—All I was saying earlier is that you have to be careful, and if there were a particular case before a court at the time we were dealing with the large issue, then we would be wise to get legal advice at that time in terms of how you deal with it. I was suggesting that the fact that somebody may be talking now of going before the courts or, in fact, may be taking something before the courts now, does not mean that by the time we deal with the issue, that issue will be before the courts, or that even the things they have wanted to raise will necessarily be before the courts at that time.

I was basically making the opposite argument, that we should proceed along to deal with Bill 30 for all the reasons that Mr. Cooke says, and that it is important that we do this and not be overly concerned with the fact that it may be under judicial review in some fashion or another and that we may have to be careful along those particular areas: for instance, not getting involved in the Hamilton decision if that were completely before the courts at that time, or around a certain aspect of whatever the actual written version—Ms. Vanstone's suggested contest at the court level—might be. That is all I was saying.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. Did you have a further comment to make?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: No. I was basically going back to my suggestion that I think it is useful to have what we have at the moment, and it might be more productive for us, in terms of having a really productive morning tomorrow and getting things in very good shape for us to take to our caucuses, for us not to try to work everything through now off the tops of our heads, but to reflect a little bit and come back after some discussion among the steering committee members and others about how we can fit some of these things together and develop a hierarchy before we meet tomorrow.

Madam Chairman: Any other comments? Mr. Keyes?

Mr. Keyes: Just one small one. When we keep talking about Bill 30, is not one of the things that we need to acquaint ourselves with off the bat the number of areas where we have had good successes in this sharing of facilities and exchange of facilities, and why they function? Let us be honest: We and the public tend to focus only on those things that are highlighted in the media, and we know that that is the Hamilton-Wentworth situation more so than anyone else.

But while there is that one major one, perhaps we have had 25 that have worked extremely well. I know that in our area, whereas it was going to be a very great competition, it just seems to be coming out and being resolved because of change in the method of operation, the appointment of a facilitator, who was able to sit down and get people working in a process first that—it still has its hitches—may work out. We should really acquaint ourselves with all the great successes that have taken place so we can look at the positive side and acknowledge that there are some that, for various reasons, do not work out.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That is an excellent point, I think, because it is not just the great successes but, in some cases, to learn why certain boards were able to move in one area whereas they were not able to in another area, and when is that a matter of what capital stock is available—

Mr. Keyes: Yes.

Mr. R. F. Johnston:—when is it other factors that have gotten in the way. I think being able to compare those things would be very, very useful to us to be able to find some solutions.

Sudbury, Hamilton, Pembroke, Toronto potentially, and maybe Amherstburg, from the looks of it, are falling apart after what looked like a fairly good solution on sharing there. I think we could be very useful. People should not forget just how useful the standing committee on social development was in the process before; not to toot our horns as individuals, but more in terms of what came before us and what ground we had to make up in terms of people's involvement and the sense that there could be positive outcomes as well as an infliction of will, which was the way it was really looked at before that committee.

I do not expect any select committee dealing with the success stories and trying to find ways of making things work better would have the thousand-odd deputations we had when we were dealing with the issue at crisis—

Interjection: Why not?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Because we would not be dealing with the principle involved as much

as: “How do you make it work? Why did it work in your community? Have you advice for other groups? Have you advice for us as a Legislature on how it would have been easier for you to come to a decision locally?” That is the kind of thing I would see us doing.

Mrs. O'Neill: I hate to say I agree, because every time I do, I am accused of twisting, but that is the way I saw the social development committee's work. That is why I do not want to go through the whole thing again. I do not personally think—and I do not care whether you say I am speaking as a former trustee—that there are many trustees in this province going to the polls in 1988 on that issue. I am sorry, I do not think there are many; there are some.

The other thing I feel, when we talk about funding of education, is that if it is going to be as broad as that, it is a repeat of the Macdonald commission. That is all I am saying. Unless we are going to put some focus to that, a very strong focus, and ask the government or whoever to do something, for certain individual projects or for a certain inequity, then in my humble opinion, we are repeating. The funding of education has been discussed since schools were built in the 1840s in this province.

I hope you understand what I am saying. You tend to twist everything I say, even when I agree. I do not want to start that way in this committee.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: This is only the first day. Let us try to get along.

Mrs. O'Neill: I just want you to understand that I have never been a person who has put out 400-page or 500-page reports—that is not my style—and I do not like being talked down to as though I were not very seriously interested in the activities of this committee. I have a lot to do, as anyone else does, and I do not think—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: What is going on here? You are taking nasty pills.

Mrs. O'Neill: I am actually, I guess, in the same frame of mind you were on the day we first met in the social development committee. I do take offence at the way I have purposely been picked out as being attempted to be misunderstood on everything I have said today. I think it is a great disservice, because I have tried to speak clearly and to try—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Paranoia of this sort normally develops at the end of hearings rather than at the beginning.

Mrs. O'Neill: I am sorry, but I think I have made my points clearly.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I will be happy to pick on all the other members as well.

Mr. Mahoney: Thank you. I am disappointed.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Mr. Mahoney, I will get back to you.

Mrs. O'Neill: I feel we should stick to trying not to redo work which has been well done by many of you who were sitting here when I was not. I think the work was well done, and let us not try to redo it. That is all I have said up to this point.

Madam Chairman: Before we proceed, I guess I had better get a commitment from Mr. Johnston to quit picking on Mrs. O'Neill, and then we will go to Mr. Reycraft.

Mr. Reycraft: I think Mr. Johnston has made a worthwhile suggestion about taking some time to think now on the matters which have been put forward by all three parties. Perhaps the steering committee could meet to develop a consensus that can be brought back to the committee tomorrow morning. We are scheduled, as I understand it, to meet as a committee at nine tomorrow morning. We might want to think about having a steering committee meeting before the regular committee, moving the committee time back perhaps to 10 o'clock. We could meet at 8:30 or nine. I know Mr. Johnston just loves these early hours.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Nine maybe.

Mr. Reycraft: You thought nine sounded better than 8:30.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Jackson, do you not have a problem tomorrow in that you have to leave early?

Mr. Jackson: No. I had a problem which I resolved by cancelling my appointment at Sheridan College today.

Madam Chairman: So the steering committee will meet at nine tomorrow morning here in committee room 1 and then the full committee will meet at 10.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: What, to rubber-stamp the steering committee?

Mr. Reycraft: Mr. Cooke, you have never rubber-stamped anything.

Madam Chairman: Before we adjourn, Mr. Keyes is desperately trying to speak.

Mr. Keyes: No, not desperately. It was to look again at the one area that was common to all three, but we did not intentionally phrase it that way: the Radwanski report. I originally started talking that way, that we should put down the Radwanski report since it is the most recent thing out and people want to react to it. We could react in this committee. It touches on so many recommendations. It shows we chose to look at them under the fields of administration, effectiveness and all those areas. In the steering committee, we have to think about that, whether you want to put a focus to the public so that its reaction to Radwanski comes to this committee, or are we just going to omit that reference and deal with the same issues he dealt with? That is really what we have all said.

Mr. Jackson: Some of the issues.

Mr. Keyes: Well, we would have some of them. Some we would talk about are some of his. We did not want to begin to put all of his 32. That did seem to be the one area where there was very general agreement, by the appearance of it.

The committee adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

CONTENTS

Monday, February 29, 1988

Organization	E-3
Adjournment	E-22

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

- Chairman:** Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)
Vice-Chairman: Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)
 Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
 Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)
 Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)
 Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)
 Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)
 Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)
 Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)
 O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)
 Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)
- Clerk:** Mellor, Lynn
- Staff:**
 Gardner, Dr. Robert J. L., Assistant Chief, Legislative Research Service
 Porter, Ann, Research Officer, Legislative Research Service



A20N
XC2
1988
E28



No. E-2

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Select Committee on Education
Organization



First Session, 34th Parliament
Tuesday, March, 1, 1988

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario
Editor of Debates: Peter Brannan

CONTENTS

Contents of the proceedings reported in this issue of Hansard appears at the back, together with a list of the members of the committee and other members and witnesses taking part.

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues can be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at (416) 965-2159.

Hansard subscription price is \$16.00 per session, from: Sessional Subscription Service, Information Services Branch, Ministry of Government Services, 5th Floor, 880 Bay Street, Toronto, M7A 1N8. Phone (416) 965-2238.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Tuesday, March 1, 1988

The committee met at 10:13 a.m. in committee room 1.

ORGANIZATION (continued)

Madam Chairman: Good morning. I think we will get started. We have just concluded a meeting of the official subcommittee, the steering committee of the select committee, and we have been able to reach a tentative consensus on a few of the items. What I will do first is run over some of the highlights and then each of the members of the subcommittee who attended can add his own comments. Then we will open it up for general discussion.

We reached an agreement in the subcommittee that it might be wise at first to take a look at the philosophy, the goals of education. We might specify certain themes such as the fact that education is a social equalizer, the limitations and expectations from that. We would, by invitation, have submissions in the first two weeks of our session, which would probably be in July if that works out as the time frame.

The first two weeks we would have submissions, by invitation, that would relate to the goals of education and, basically, whether we are on the road to achieving those. In the second part of our initial session, we would then go on to some specifics. It has been suggested that we take four items—streaming, grade promotion, the Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions curriculum guidelines and semestering—and concentrate on those four items. The second session would be in September and, from the subcommittee's comments, would include advertising, public submissions and travelling to schools and would allow for a week at the end of September to start preparing the report.

I would like to call on the members of the subcommittee, who can elaborate and open up the discussion.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I will start first with the notion of why deal with the philosophical underpinnings before we choose any of the items that have already been laid out for us by Dr. Gardner and Ms. Porter. The notion is similar to what Radwanski did in his report. He felt he had to look at what the goals were before he could then determine whether the system was meeting

the goals. From our perspective this morning, it seemed that what we wanted to do was have some discussion of education philosophy before we then moved into particular issues. The concern was that we did not want to spend two months with educational theorists coming in and talking about education philosophy and not get anything practical done.

What we wanted to try to accomplish this morning was to have some discussion of how we would limit that theoretical two-week period, not just to who would come and that kind of thing but also to which philosophical underpinnings of education we want to have discussed. My recommendation to the subcommittee, and it concurred, was that perhaps one of the crucial questions we might ask would be around the philosophical base of education as a social equalizer, the kind of thing Mr. Mahoney was raising yesterday.

What should our expectations be of the system? Do we have too high an expectation for what education can do in terms of allowing people to have upward social mobility? Are there structural problems within the system that run against the goals of trying to have that integration? Get people to come in and talk about the sort of evolution of education and that kind of thing over the years, in terms of how we have tried to deal with that issue since Ryerson first talked about that philosophical underpinning.

Then the idea was that if we could limit it to that kind of discussion rather than dealing with some of the other pedagogical premises and other principles of education which are basic to the system, we might then, in the fall, develop a package of hard issues flowing from that principle which we could deal with. That was when we thought of coming forward with a small package which would include streaming, ability grouping, semestering and grade promotion, which is very tied to that whole notion, OSIS, because if you look at what Radwanski says and his notion of getting rid of streaming, it has a dramatic impact on how you develop a credit system or get rid of a credit system, depending on how you interpret it.

Mr. Jackson raised the point as well that if you move to the kind of things, for instance what Radwanski was suggesting about mandatory

summer courses for people who fail, which comes back to grade promotion, then you run into a problem of interfering with the semestering system, because a person whose semester ends in January and who fails would then potentially have to wait until the summer to take a mandatory course; so semestering would be tied into that as well.

The idea we were talking about was whether, in the four weeks in September we may have to operate on, we can deal with that little package of issues. If the members of the committee can think of other things which should be in that or things which should be deleted from that to make it possible for us to do it, the goal would be that we would have a sufficient concentration that we could actually produce a meaningful report on an area of education that could be fairly isolated. We would not do what we were leading to yesterday, which was, with our shopping list, to decide what the next order of business will be until we actually get into September.

1020

At that stage, we may well decide that the next logical step from what we have just dealt with, if we deal with this, would be apprenticeship, vocational programs, technical programs, things like that; or it might be that the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward) will have come out with a major response on funding and the committee will want to involve itself in public hearings on that; or it might be that for various reasons we think that the next period in January or February when we could meet would be an appropriate time to deal with Bill 30 or any other educational issue which may have arisen at that time. At least we would have a package with some kind of limitation on it that would have allowed us to produce a report of some meaning for September.

That was the general consensus, I think, that we arrived at this morning. Other members may wish to add more to it, but if we get consensus on the general direction, I really want us to have a notion of how we would define the limitation on the philosophical debate for the two weeks and whether or not people think the package we are talking about—the streaming, grade promotion, OSIS curriculum guidelines and semestering—is an appropriate one, a possible one for us to do in the fall and to produce a report on.

Mr. Jackson: When I raised yesterday the issue of philosophy, I suggested that it is important that we get presentations from the various academics and people involved in

education in order to ensure that we get a basis on which we can begin work in this area.

However, in our discussions this morning a new wrinkle has emerged, and I think we should share that with the committee. Although the Progressive Conservative caucus is most anxious that we deal with some of the problems with Bill 30—we have articulated that and we are getting a sense that is not an area that the committee wishes to proceed in—it is important that we understand that in the basic question about philosophy in education the question of the distinct mission and role of Catholic education in this province are going to be brought forward and brought into question.

I do not shy away from that inquiry. I think it is essential, because we have had no forum to discuss the fact that we have two public systems of education in this province now and there has never been a forum by which we have examined what the purposes are and what both systems are obligated to society to achieve for their citizens. However, I have some concerns about how we approach this, given that on at least one occasion the Minister of Education has stated publicly that, at least in his mind, these two systems may serve two different objectives in society. If that is the case, then perhaps it may provide an opportunity for us to learn from that inquiry.

Clearly, we will be receiving presentations. We have to deal with it in terms of the two systems that operate in this province. That was a notion that really did not get raised yesterday. I think it is fair for the committee to put it in context that we may see a dichotomy emerge right from the opening day that we have two distinct systems in this province that possibly purport to serve two different missions, whether or not the minister and the deputy minister wish to enlighten the committee in terms of whether they themselves have resolved in their own minds that there is a distinction and that the current policies are being developed accordingly.

I do not wish to elaborate on the other items. With regard to my desire to pursue semestering, if it is the decision of the committee to look at matters in the Radwanski report as set out in the subset of organization of educational processes, we are prepared to proceed on that basis.

The other point that was perhaps not raised yesterday, but for the rest of the members of the committee, is that the Radwanski report implies that semestering should be eliminated, but it does not get into explanations about semestered schools versus nonsemestered schools. I think

that is an item we should resolve fairly quickly. It might even be an item about which we will ask him to advise us with more clarity, and the fact that standardized tests may not fit comfortably into the way we organize our schoolday. That may be appropriate in order to meet our objectives in that four-week time frame. Those were the only other points I would add to what I thought was new information this morning that might be shared with committee members.

Mr. Reycraft: I support the suggestion that was made by Mr. Johnston this morning. Mr. Radwanski, as he said, has really addressed the matter that there is a need, before you enter into any serious discussion of the system and the need for review or change in the system, to clearly define what the goals of the system are supposed to be. Mr. Radwanski makes the point in his report that the existing goals are very vague and very confusing. Those are terms we were using yesterday in talking about our terms of reference. There is a need to review those, to define them as clearly as possible and to make sure they are contemporary, that they fit the situation which now exists within our society.

I think there is a need for us to review the philosophy of the system, to focus on those goals, to try to define them as clearly as we can before we then proceed to discussion of various aspects of the system. In September we can in go into discussion of the streaming which is now done in the secondary panel and look at the matter of semestering that Mr. Jackson has mentioned and perhaps at some of the other items that fall under that category of organization of the educational process.

Before we can even do that, I think we need to spend some time reviewing the goals of the system and try to develop a consensus on that. It would be helpful, not only for us as a committee but for the various components of the educational community which are going to appear before us, to have some sense of where we think the system should be going and what it should be doing for the people of this province.

Mr. Mahoney: I have a question, and I do not know which one of the members of the subcommittee wants to answer it. If we are going to talk about philosophy and goals for two weeks, which I think you are suggesting is the agreement, are we going to go to any hearings or getting any input from administrators, trustees, teachers and people during that two-week period; and is that enough time to deal with it?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: We did talk about it a fair amount. Mr. Jackson raised concerns about

how many people you can actually see. Our esteemed clerk estimated that we could see probably 32 groups in a two-week period. If you look at our list of the major organizations involved and some of the academics we might want to bring in. That would be something which we thought would be manageable within that period, especially if we are, as Mr. Reycraft has just been saying, clear enough in our instructions to these various organizations about what we want out of that two weeks. So they do not see it as something which has to cover the entire waterfront of education at that stage. We could probably do it.

What we want to come up with from members, other than just the critics, the parliamentary assistant and others, are ideas of who it would be appropriate to invite.

We would not do this one by major advertisement; we would do this by invitation. There are ways of trying to encourage representational, province-wide groupings to be the ones to make the presentations, rather than individual organizations such as a local school board, a local teachers' federation or that kind of thing. My estimate would be that we could work it out.

The 32 would be in a four-day week. If we got a bigger listing than that, there are two options. We can shorten the presentations, which again, as Mr. Jackson was saying, in this kind of situation is probably not the best way of doing it. You probably want to have a fairly long period of time with people who have been working in this area for years. But I guess we could add an extra full day over that two-week period and be able to add another six or so deputations. We could probably manage it.

1030

Mr. Mahoney: Then the philosophy-goals section would deal primarily with professionals who deal in the industry, in the business of educating. For the second phase of the first phase, if you want to call it that, I guess you are saying we would go to the general public, to the parents, to the nonprofessionals.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is my inclination—members of the subcommittee should just jump in on this—that we should involve the parents' umbrella organizations on this at the beginning as well. The two major province-wide organizations would be brought in and any student organization that is representational on a broad scope, if we can find it, should be brought in as well at that time.

But yes, you are right; in principle, the major public input and the advertising to the public

about what we are up to would be geared more around the fall hearings on the particular matters, whether it is the question of streaming, the question of semestering or whatever.

Mr. Mahoney: Just so I am clear, on some of the issues we talked about yesterday, when we are talking about the broad issue of funding, obviously everything you talk about seems to come full circle back to that. On the other issues of the vocational, technical and all that kind of thing, do you see this as really coming out of the philosophy-goals discussions, sort of intermingling around that rather than specifying it in our terms of reference?

Would we be asking these professional groups, for example, to come and talk to us strictly on a broad scale or would we be looking for input on the funding issue, on the vocational issue and that kind of thing?

Madam Chairman: If I may leap in on that one, Mr. Mahoney, from the subcommittee's consensus, if I am not mistaken, we felt that even though we had isolated four specific topics for the September phase, there was a good likelihood that people would come in with many other diverse issues. I am sure there will be groups that will make presentations in the goals and philosophy section that will be back again to give specifics in the September session.

One thing we talked about at some length was whether we would limit it to umbrella groups by invitation, since we are fairly limited to two weeks of hearings. I do not think we really reached a consensus. We started out saying they would be umbrella groups, but then we discovered we would probably be able to hear in the vicinity of 30 groups and we might be able to broaden that somewhat.

Mr. Mahoney: Just as a brief comment, I think the consensus is a good one. My only concern is that I would hope we would not simply become a duplicate of Radwanski. There are a lot of different issues that I hope this committee will deal with that he did not. At the same time, we can examine some of the issues he dealt with. I hope we are that broad that we will do that.

Mr. Villeneuve: It is certainly going to be an enlightening experience for me on this select committee on education. I had occasion to substitute on several occasions during Bill 30 and I thought it was most enlightening.

Talking about philosophy and goals, it annoys me no end when we hear people tell us that some of our graduates at the secondary level and even at the university level have difficulty putting together a coherent paragraph in either official

language. We can talk in the clouds all we like, but this is pretty basic stuff. If indeed that is true, I think we may have to come down a little lower in the latter area to try to face the real problems that are coming forth.

We also have to look at the value received by the community at large for education and the dollars spent on education. I think we take the taxpayers for granted many times and education is a very large portion of this province's budget. We have some very learned people who have put out some very extensive documents, like Radwanski, Macdonald, and, yes, Shapiro. I know the Shapiro report is quite controversial. I think we should look at it as well. I think it presents an area that has been overlooked, intentionally or otherwise, by Queen's Park.

Yes, philosophy and goals are great, but let us set them so that we can come up with something realistic and the taxpayers and the students of this province will both benefit. We cannot divorce full funding of separate schools, Bill 30, and funding in general. I think most of the people who make depositions here will have that as their primary focus. I cannot see us being able to divorce that from any philosophy that we may choose.

Madam Chairman: I suspect you are quite right in that. The only thing we can say is that we had to limit it somehow and I suspect every member here would have a little hobby-horse that he or she thinks is the most important issue in Ontario education that he or she would like to address.

I will reiterate that, although we will try to narrow it down to these four topics or whatever topics the committee decides upon, I do feel people will be coming with a broad spectrum of opinion and you may find that parents are coming and saying they are not getting their value for our education dollar and they are honing in on some of the basic problems you refer to in the system. I do not think hope is lost by the fact that we are going to spend several weeks on philosophy and then go into the other areas.

Mr. Villeneuve: I have always found it interesting that sometimes the aims of parents are quite different from those of their children, the students within the system. I would certainly like to see some input at that level as well.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. I see the clerk busy writing on that, so I am sure it will be taken into consideration.

Mrs. O'Neill: I certainly like the result of the meeting this morning. I would ask any one of the three gentlemen who were on the subcommittee

to respond regarding the role he sees for employers in this first two weeks regarding goals. I hope it is not just going to be educational theorists, because I think we have come a long way from Ryerson's time for those people who are interested in what is happening in the classroom. Indeed, as a couple of the members of the committee already mentioned, we expect certain things from the community, from employers, particularly in co-operative education.

I hope that in the invitational group there will be some very strong representation from chambers of commerce or from union groups, groups that have up this point shown an interest in what goes on in our schools. I do not know whether that was discussed. Maybe it was.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It was not, and it is a really good point. I think as long as we can continue to try to do it in the two-week period, umbrella organizations, the Ontario Federation of Labour and the chambers and others would be really good groups to have involved in that implication.

The other thing I guess we have not said very much on is that when we get to the next stage, most of the major players will be back as well, clearly to deal with the individual things, and I would not preclude individual chambers and individual labour councils and that kind of thing coming forward at that stage. But it is a very good point that we actually did not touch on this morning. I presume there is a consensus on that, because it is a very good point.

Mrs. O'Neill: I hope there is, because I really think we will be leaving out a very strong component if we do not.

The other thing I would like to ask directly to Mr. Jackson is, when you said you wanted to bring forward a wrinkle, where do you see the wrinkle developing? Are you concerned regarding the separate schools making a different kind of presentation or coming on very strong in those first two weeks regarding goals? Do you see two entirely different—and I do not like to use the word, but I will—camps coming forward to us, showing us that their wares are better than the other's? You used the word "wrinkle" and I guess that is what stirred my imagination.

Mr. Jackson: Yes. It had not occurred to me when I proposed philosophy of education—I was still thinking with my pre-Bill 30 hat on: what should education do for society? It was not until this morning that I realized—and I based that on some recent statements by the minister—that it is possible to perceive there are two approaches to what education fulfils for the two distinct

societies, the public system and the separate system, which serves the needs of both. It was not my intention to create a distinction at that early juncture of our work, and I have not even clearly resolved in my mind if it is wise that we even do it.

1040

I thought I articulated it. The subcommittee did not feel any difficulty with it, and I felt it was something I should share—again, as I said, a wrinkle, meaning it is something we did not discuss openly, and that is what I meant by a wrinkle. I feel better now having shared it with you, because I do not know what is going to be stated.

There has been no forum since Bill 30, and Bill 30, in and of itself, was not a good forum to discuss it, because there was a lot of speculation and we did not really have the time to get into what education purports to do for society. We were into so much of the nuts and bolts of Bill 30 that we really did not do justice to that overall question.

This now becomes the very first opportunity or forum in Ontario for that question. I was just trying to put it into context for people, because God only knows what is going to happen at that. I do not know. You have asked me to speculate. I do not know.

Mrs. O'Neill: I guess what I wanted to follow up, then, is that I presume in these invitations we will have relatively equal representation from both systems, and therefore I do not see this as a wrinkle. I mean, it is a reality. How their presentations will be made is, as you say, totally our presumption. But I hope we will recognize in our invitations that there are two systems within the province, and that is the way I feel we should recognize whatever you consider a wrinkle.

Mr. Jackson: I agree, and that is why I felt it important that it be put in context for the committee, because there may be some interesting points of view that emerge from that, that in fact the government has an obligation to develop two separate and distinct educational philosophies and goals, and that, in and of itself, becomes a form of streaming. It creates all sorts of very interesting questions.

The point I was making was that this has never been done before. Mind you, Bill 30 is only two years old. Anyway, you are clear now where I am coming from? You are OK?

Mrs. O'Neill: Yes, I am, except that I presume you did suggest that you are going to have equal representation from both systems.

Mr. Jackson: Oh, absolutely. I never doubted that.

Mr. Furlong: I like the outline that I heard this morning. I do have a concern, however. I wonder what is magical about the two-week time frame. It strikes me that we may be in a position where we are here to get some input from our various groups—umbrella groups and ultimately the public—and we seem to be wanting to confine all of this in a two-week period. It would strike me, anyway, that we might want to go for a month. I do not know. The members opposite are more experienced than I am.

I just think if we start limiting it to a two-week time frame, then, as you say, if we want an hour, we cut down the time they spend here, and I think that would be a disaster. We should be available to hear the presentations and hear as many in whatever time it takes.

Madam Chairman: I think Mr. Reycraft would like to address that point.

Mr. Reycraft: I do not think we should necessarily confine ourselves to two weeks. We started out talking about a couple of weeks in July, I guess, and somehow that became two weeks. If, after discussing the groups that we think we want to hear from on the philosophy and goals of education, we decide that we need more time, then I do not see any problem in asking for three weeks or even more. I think it is important that we hear from the groups we need to hear from and that we have enough time to question them and to discuss their sense of goals and objectives. That is far more important than confining ourselves to any specific time frame.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: One of the caveats I would put on it would be that there is this huge competition for committees and committee time. We have already seen that with the standing committee on social development not being able to meet, for instance, during this period.

Second, in our discussions this morning I think it is something important to think about that we really do want to confine the general philosophical discussion to being just a portion of what we are doing and not to being our report entirely, because people would see that as not really addressing all the problems that are out there.

So, with those two caveats, I agree, and because we have one House leader and a whip on this committee already, we should be able to work out a committee schedule.

Mr. Furlong: Did the subcommittee discuss the possibility of this committee getting an extension? At least at this stage, it strikes me that

what we are going to be embarking on may take longer than a year. Has that been discussed?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: This morning we basically said that in that report one of the major things would be to outline what we saw the real time line was likely to be, or at least the schedule of things that we would like to try to do at the end of that, yes. Thanks.

Mr. Keyes: Are we to produce an interim report?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: A series of interim reports, I would suggest.

Mr. Mahoney: I have a question about the location of the hearings. Is it all going to be here or are we going to move around at all? Did you talk about that?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Not a lot. The presumption was that for the two weeks in the summer we will probably be here, or two and a bit weeks or whatever, but that we would move in the fall. We will try to get into schools and see different experiences around the province and maybe elsewhere.

One of the items we have to have on our agenda this morning is what role we give to Ms. Porter and Mr. Gardner, and one of the things we might ask of them is to look at other jurisdictions. We know of our own reports around some of these issues in the province. We would want those compiled in some sort of background information, but we might also want to know what other jurisdictions are dealing with some of these issues, and that might extend our travel a little bit this fall.

Mr. Mahoney: When we heard deputations in the standing committee on general government on the Metro bill, one of the problems that occurred was that a decision had been made early on not to advertise. There was, in my opinion, some legitimate criticism of that decision that we unnecessarily excluded potential people, and we wound up putting in a last-minute ad. You know, it was a bit uncomfortable.

Should we be advertising, even the two weeks, if only to ensure that we allow an opportunity and that we do not have a last-minute group come along and say, "Why didn't somebody tell me about this?" When you exclude groups by the result of not advertising, I think you open up the committee to some criticism and, therefore, potentially hurt the outcome and the procedure.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I want to raise a delicate matter, if I might, and as a past chair, we have wrestled with this issue any number of times. I think for practical reasons this time it would be

wise for us to try to do the first part by invitation for two reasons: first, to try to confine the debate better for the philosophical terms, because that has the scope to just blow all over the place and to be something which we would find very difficult to focus; and second, the fact that if we then advertise for the fall, which I would presume we would do, when people come in to talk to us at that time, there is nothing that will stop them from dealing with what we were dealing with in the two weeks in the summer anyhow.

That is to say, you know, "The presumption behind streaming is this, such-and-such and so on, and I disagree with that philosophical point of view," etc. I think the fact that we will be advertising a practical follow-up for the fall session on the same basic issues, or real issues following from those principles, will allow people to deal with them and should get away from that complaint.

The other reality about a summer hearing on education things, as we recall from the Bill 30 hearings, is that people who will be able to come in July will be people to whom we will have given lots of advance notice, who will be organizations, and the others will much prefer to wait until September, when the real world of education has started, and come to us in their local communities or here.

Mr. Mahoney: I think as long as we make it clear that we have not just arbitrarily restricted access to the committee, that will be important. Otherwise, we will spend a great deal of time defending the decision not to advertise, and that would be a waste of our time.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Keyes and Mrs. O'Neill have indicated that they wish to speak. Is it on this point, Mr. Keyes?

Mr. Keyes: I can appreciate being sensitive. I think one of the greatest problems we have got to be careful of is that we are now meeting in February to determine our terms of reference. We are not going to do anything until July. I think it is important how we communicate that to the public so that people are aware of the reason the select committee will not start meetings until July.

I think it is very crucial how we do advertise. I guess I would tend to favour news media releases, etc., announcing that we will be starting to hold public hearings in July, but there is a way of phrasing how we are attempting to set that first period that might still let the general public know that we are doing it. Even though they are not general representations that are being made to the committee at that time, we are seeking represen-

tative views of society, however we frame that, society being the administrators, the teachers, students, business and labour.

1050

This will really be the first opportunity that the public has to have a say in something. There has not really been a big look at education—my point—from the Hall-Dennis report until now. In a sense, people are comparing Radwanski to Dennis. There is a phenomenal difference in the reports' contents and they are at the two opposite ends of the spectrum. I think we have to be very careful that we do not destroy our own credibility by organizing nothing from now until July. I think that can happen, but it should be done as a build-up type of approach so that people say, "Yes, we can have a say at all levels in this."

You may be running a risk, but I would rather run the risk of even letting them know in July what we are doing, letting that be publicly known, as long as we are careful how we phrase what we are doing in July so that they will then see that, having set a firm basis of input on philosophy of goals of education in today's society, we are then prepared for the general public to have input, at which time it will advance its own theories of philosophical directions, in the context of what input they have on the issues.

I just think it is very strategic how the public will perceive it, once we know that those in the media are the ones who will basically frame that, so we will have to be aware of that.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Fisher, you are listening very closely? Mrs. O'Neill?

Mrs. O'Neill: It is very similar to what Mr. Keyes said.

Mr. Jackson: Could the record show that was a reference to Robert Fisher of the CBC?

Mr. Keyes: Affirmative. That would help.

Mr. Jackson: It would help Hansard immensely.

Mr. Keyes: I remember the names of all the media here, but I thought that might have been embarrassing.

Mrs. O'Neill: I think it would certainly be to our advantage to communicate to all of the educational groups and employer-federated union groups exactly why the select committee is not meeting when the Legislature is. You cannot make it too simple because the understanding of what we are doing here is important. I think any group that has any interest in education should get a press release. I do not think we should leave it totally to the media here. We should state why

we have decided to do it this way—to develop ourselves this frame of reference—and then I think we should encourage them to be prepared to communicate with us in September if they will not be among those who will be invited as organized groups in July.

The perception is important, as has been said, but what I also think is that this committee is a committee of legislators. We have to do our homework and we are doing it in this organized way. We can show in our invitations that we are going to be fair and we are going to make it representative. Before we go out too far, we should determine at least the groupings of people we will be inviting. I think that the concept of this, in the sense of fairness, will set a very good groundwork for us, whether it be fairness with educators, employers or special-interest groups.

We should let them see that they will be represented somehow here, and I would like to explain our time lines as much as possible. We can even suggest that we likely will be asking for extensions if we, in the very scraping of the surface of this subject, realize how broad and comprehensive it is going to be.

What I will suggest to you, and I know it is going to happen—anybody who sits around here knows that—is that, whether we want it or not, we are going to get a lot of written representations in those first two weeks from people we do not invite because, whether we invite response or not, we get hundreds of responses. I have seen it around here and I have not been here that long. So there will be a lot more response to that than what we will elicit directly.

Mr. Keyes: Just following up on that, that is what is so important: to be sure in our own type of news release that we can still welcome the written input, even in our comments about a release, even though they will not be doing official presentations. I think this whole idea of openness to input of material is very crucial.

Madam Chairman: In reference to your one point, Mrs. O'Neill, the clerk has just advised me that she will have a tentative list drafted for our consideration immediately after lunch, so we will have something in hand. Mr. Reycraft, I believe you had your hand up.

Mr. Reycraft: I just wanted to assure Mrs. O'Neill that the educational community will know in short order what we have decided. It monitors Hansard very carefully and then communicates with its membership. I do not think there is any need to issue a press release to make sure that the—

Interjections.

Mr. Reycraft: Oh, she has taken off the dark glasses. Now we know who it is.

Those who have an interest in what this committee is doing and what it is about will find out very quickly what has been decided with respect to hearings and schedules.

Mrs. O'Neill: I was thinking more of individual school boards.

Mr. Reycraft: The school boards themselves, I am sure, will hear from the Association of Large School Boards in Ontario and the Ontario Public School Trustees' Association and—

Mrs. O'Neill: They do not. I am sorry.

Mr. Reycraft:—other organizations that monitor Hansard and then report to their membership through newsletters and other means of communication.

Mrs. O'Neill: I am sorry, I really find that does not live itself out because I had two groups in my office yesterday morning—two school boards—which both told me they did not get the information I thought they had through their trustee organization. I cannot help that, but I really do feel that this is important enough. If there are only 140 boards in this province, we should communicate with them, as a matter of courtesy if nothing else. Maybe there is no great rush on it, but I think Mr. Keyes's point is well taken, namely, that they are at the moment the people in this province who are responsible for providing education and they should be knowing what this committee is doing.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I have never been opposed to making work for the clerk. I always thought this a useful thing for us to do, but I think some sense of the reality of how legislative committees work needs to be remembered here.

First, even when we had advertised widely and asked for public hearings, it was at the invitation of the committee as to who should attend. Even if you do put the advertisement out and say "Come one, come all," the committee traditionally around here makes decisions about who does or does not come. I am really concerned that if we open up the period in July to the community at large, when we are talking about the philosophical underpinning, we will spend all our time just doing that and we will never get past that to get down to some of the hard-issue implications of it, which I think would be a real mistake for us in larger accountability terms.

I think we have tried in the past to do what Mr. Keyes is talking about, that is, actually to put out a notice telling people when hearings are taking

place and inviting people to make written submissions. We have done that on a number of occasions, sometimes with overwhelming success and sometimes with not that great a response. For example, there was the thing we did with the elders' abuse a number of years ago. That is something that we could look at.

I would again suggest a limited advertising because, if we look at the costs now for doing the full advertising that we will have to do for the fall—and we would have to redo for the fall anyhow just to make sure that the general public is aware of it—we are talking about an awful lot of money.

I would still prefer that we try to develop a good mailing list for this first batch, with all members having input and expressing their concerns about anybody who might be left out from the general information, and that we try to gain some consensus about which overall umbrella groups we would like to invite as our primary group that we want in, and then to do our major advertising in the fall. That would be my preference in terms of how we order things, just in terms of knowing, as a past chairman, when you get swamped by a lot of public requests for people to come, how hard it is then to make the decisions about whom you do not include.

We will be dealing in that first period with philosophical concerns, but wanting it more as an underpinning. For our purposes at that time, we will require from the educational professions and academics their thoughts about it and then from the parent umbrella groups, the labour umbrella groups and the business umbrella groups about how they see it responding to their real goals for education. That is really what we want out of that period, a more limited representational kind of involvement. What we want in the fall is as much participation as we can possibly generate from all interested parties in the educational system. I really think it would be important for us to make those kinds of distinctions.

1100

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I will be very brief, but I want to agree with Mr. Reycraft. I mean it is not our responsibility to carry out the job of the trustees' associations. That is why boards pay membership fees in the trustees' associations. They have full-time government liaison people to keep track of what is going on around here. They certainly did a good job during the Bill 30 hearings.

Our major purpose, as I understand it, is to write a report on education. I am not particularly overly concerned with developing great lists so

we develop good public relations. I want to get the information so that we can write a decent report. The trustees and the teachers' federations will have to communicate with their members. I think it would be crazy, even though we have computers around this place, to start developing huge lists where we start sending out press releases so that everybody knows we are meeting or spending \$20,000—I think it is up to \$20,000 now for one ad in the dailies across the province. That would just be silly.

I had looked at that first two weeks as being something that was going to give us a basis for the rest of the process of this committee. If we are going to get that proper base, then we want the people we consider as a committee to be the most helpful at doing that. That is why it should be by invitation only. Let us not make this more complicated than it need be.

Mr. Jackson: I would like to address that point as well. I referred to it in this morning's meeting as well. Clearly, the education community was not impressed by the mandate of the committee as it was tabled in the Legislature. There is a certain degree of cynicism about whether this committee can achieve a consensus report in a short enough amount of time, which even starts to get at the terms of reference of the committee. Then it has the omnibus statement about any other things that we wish to bring forward.

That, in some small measure, might be why the trustee organizations and teachers' federations will not really take the work of this committee seriously until they hear from us how we are going to order up that agenda. That may, in part, account for why teachers and trustees have been beating a path to our doors and then asking, "What the heck are you doing? Why have I not been told?"

I think that is part of that. I do not think we can suggest in any way, shape or form that is a problem with the lobby groups, if I can use the term, without just identifying trustees or teachers, all of them, or the media for that part. I mean the media looked at the terms of reference in much the same way the groups did. It has only been in the last two days that we have even discussed in a public forum in this room that we were bringing the whole thing down to a focus. That message will be out there fairly soon and there may be at least several groups that are relieved that we are at least starting with what our goals in education are. I think they will be pleased we are discussing that.

As I said this morning, I did not bring my wish list, as I think the chair referred to it, from the Conservative caucus. I spent the better part of four days contacting all of the various groups that were on the initial list, plus the 12 I have added to the list, contacting them to ask them what they feel we should be doing. I really presented not the Progressive Conservative Party's wish list; I submitted what I was hearing from the major educational advocates in this province. I am pleased we have at least accepted the philosophy.

The other point I want to share is that because there is a major gulf between the public's perception of what we are doing in school, we have to be careful that the public does not come up with the perception that our first phase is navel-gazing, if I can use that for want of a better expression. Yet, as someone who has been involved in education, I advocated for and understand the importance of us going through that initial step, but we cannot get bogged down by it nor can we try to convey that with all the problems in education we have a group of 12 MPPs sitting in a room discussing philosophical arguments.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That is more than there were for the Constitution.

Mr. Jackson: Sure. We wanted to be sensitive that we did not get stuck into that mode.

If I can just address the final point, which was the initial point raised about this whole thing, we have to be careful in terms of a time frame. If we suggest that we conduct meetings over a three- or four-week period, then we will get people telling us that they would like to come from day one to 30 days later. That creates all sorts of historical nightmares for our clerk.

By confining it to the two weeks, we can then extend it to a third week if we wish, but if you tell people you have four weeks, then we will do two weeks of work spread over three or four weeks. That is not fair to our researchers who have a fair amount of work, let alone the subcommittee when there is some discussion about us assisting the research in developing the reports as we go along from stage to stage.

I just thought I would comment on those three points which I was hearing, and I waited until I could comment.

Mr. Keyes: Just merely as an add-on to Mr. Johnston's method in regard to the high cost of advertising, I think we are overlooking an excellent opportunity to advertise that would enlist the support of all members of all caucuses. We all send out householders between now and

the fall. They are nonpolitical in content and they go to every household in Ontario.

Mr. Jackson: I would like to read yours.

Mr. Keyes: Mine has been cited as the highlight for nonpartisanship. They go to every household in Ontario. I think we really miss a bit if we do not try to spell this out as kind of the highlight select committee and ask every member to be sure that the same little type of ad that we are going to prepare to go in the daily, we want inserted in our own householders.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: If we are going to do that, we would want to put one in, unlike the ones you put in the newspapers, that people could understand. I suggest a different wording would be a good idea.

Mr. Keyes: Right.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I think it is an innovative notion actually to suggest that be sent around by the chair. The one caveat I would put on it, of course, is that every member, as is the right of an individual member, has the right to put in whatever he or she wishes.

Mr. Keyes: Oh, sure.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Some of them may decide that we are not as important as we know we are.

Mr. Mahoney: And will become.

Mr. Keyes: I think they will all agree.

Madam Chairman: That is certainly a possibility the subcommittee can discuss and it might even be willing to draft a tentative one to send around to all caucus members for their comments.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The clerk is good at that.

Madam Chairman: The clerk will then draft it, if we are very nice to her. Any other comments?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Do we need a motion or not? If we have consensus, we probably do not need a motion.

Madam Chairman: If I am not mistaken, we seem to have reached a consensus on the content of both the July and September hearings, if that is correct.

Mr. Jackson: And the time frame.

Madam Chairman: Yes.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: And the general time frame for this.

Madam Chairman: We have heard a couple of different viewpoints on the advertising. Mrs. O'Neill and Mr. Keyes, have you changed your viewpoints at all?

Mrs. O'Neill: I never was for advertising on this. I think it is invitations.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: But a mailing of some sort.

Mrs. O'Neill: I feel that is the way to go on this first two weeks, but I did give some ideas about what I thought should happen in the way of press releases and the kind of communications we should have with the educational groups. I am willing to move a bit on who the educational groups should be. If people do not want to send it directly to school boards, that is fine and I will go that route. But I do think it is very good public relations to keep in touch with those people who are elected to look after education in this province on a direct basis.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Mrs. O'Neill, do you see it as something maybe the steering committee could work on? The difficulty, as Mr. Cooke just whispered in my ear, is that if we do decide that we should somehow do a regular mailing or some kind of a mailing to all boards—

Mrs. O'Neill: I do not want a regular mailing.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: No, no.

Mrs. O'Neill: My intent is for this first to tell the way we are going at least for the first six months.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: If we were to do that, then we cannot just pick out the boards and say the boards are the appropriate ones. We have to do it to each individual teachers'-federation local as well and we are talking about what could be a substantial mailing list. If we could take the notion that what we want to do is make sure that there is no section of the educational community that is not aware of what our general parameters are and where we are going, then we could try to work out the best way to deal with it at a later date.

1110

Mrs. O'Neill: If I may interject, the boards are the ones that get the funding for education, the ones that levy the taxes, and they can disseminate this to their own employees and federations in their own units. I see the board—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: But if you are suggesting that the association of boards does not give its boards the notice, do you think the boards are going to give it to their employees? My God, no.

Mrs. O'Neill: I obviously have a different attitude towards how that should be done. As I say, I gave a suggestion. If you want to work on it, fine. My remarks were more in line with the entire general invitation and how we disseminate

who we are inviting and what the time frame of our work is.

I feel it is important that we give that information to the general community very widely, because we can be criticized and get off on a very bad foot. Mr. Jackson has talked about navel-gazing. I think there has to be a really good reason given for why we decided to go this way. If we show the kind of broad representation of invitations we are going to give, a lot of the trouble will be gone right away.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Why don't you get your office staff to work on that and Frank can do the mailing?

Mrs. O'Neill: Mr. Cooke, I do not appreciate your personal attacks on me that continue. Thank you very much.

Madam Chairman: The consensus I do see on advertising is that the July phase should be by invitation only and that the September phase would be broadly advertised, depending on where we will be travelling in the province. Perhaps the details of the advertising could be left to the steering committee. We would certainly take Mrs. O'Neill's comments into consideration, as well as Mr. Keyes's about the householder. Is that agreed? Agreed.

Mr. Keyes: The subcommittee did a fine job this morning at nine. Maybe we could meet again—

Madam Chairman: I thought that, next time, eight o'clock would be better.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That way, we may start at nine.

Mr. Keyes: I have no idea why you wait until the day is half over before you meet.

Interjections.

Mr. Mahoney: For clarification, I think both Mr. Jackson and Mr. Johnston said yesterday that it would be necessary to take the outcome of this to their caucuses. Is that still the case?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: From my perspective, it is not a problem at this stage. We do have to meet again anyway, because we have to strike a budget. I suggest the easiest thing would be for us to take it back through, just to make sure we do not have any problems. If there is some good input back to us about how we should adjust things, that would be useful too. We do have to meet about the budget and other kinds of matters, such as giving more specific direction to research and that kind of thing, and go over that prime list we will have. I think my caucus will find no difficulty with what we decide.

Mr. Mahoney: My only concern with it is that generally, when you go back to a new group that has not been part of the original discussions, you could wind up back here saying, "Our caucus says we have to deal with Bill 30 and that's that."

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That is only because you allow them to have real input.

Interjections.

Mr. Mahoney: I think we should invite your caucuses to come and make deputations.

Mr. Jackson: Madam Chairman, may I just say to Mr. Mahoney that the logistics of either Richard or me getting a lot of feedback over a short period of time from either of our caucuses is not a major challenge.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Reycraft, you may have a slightly greater challenge. Would you like to comment?

Mr. Reycraft: I just want to say, having heard Mr. Jackson and Mr. Johnston speak often about how committees should be independent of any direction or authority from ministries, that I am sure they feel the same way about caucuses.

Mr. Mahoney: In other words, we are not going back to ours.

Mr. Jackson: Who are you going to talk to, Madam Chairman? You advise your kids, right?

Madam Chairman: I will have monologues. My children do not listen to me either.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: What else have we decided? We are going to try to meet again. How quickly do we think we can do that once the House has reconvened? We have to put in a request, so we have to pass something which puts the request, a motion to meet again in April. I would so move, and that the request be forwarded to the government House leader.

Madam Chairman: Mr. R. F. Johnston moves that the committee meet again in April.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: The sooner it is done, the better. We will not have a budget or estimates, and the committees will be quiet for the first few weeks.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Exactly.

Mr. Reycraft: I think the request should go to the whips. Did the terms of reference not say that we could sit while the House was sitting, with the permission of the whips?

Madam Chairman: Yes.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It will be only one day and I presume it will be fairly short, given what we have already decided. As long as we get a

good steering committee meeting in before it, we should have a fairly precise presentation. Is there anything that we want to direct research to at this stage?

Madam Chairman: The only thing that I feel we have not touched on this morning is the role of research. Also, we did bring up the contact list which the clerk had committed to have immediately after lunch. With the broad consensus we reached this morning and the fact that we are sending a lot of the matters, such as travel and advertising and the honing down of the mandate to the steering committee, it may not be necessary to meet this afternoon. If we could discuss the role of research, the clerk could go over the tentative list that she has prepared at this time, and we may not need to meet after lunch, if that is agreeable.

Mr. Jackson: Can the clerk read my writing?

Clerk of the Committee: You may want to change a few things when I read them out.

Mr. Chairman: Perhaps the role of research first. Bob, would you like to discuss this?

Mr. Gardner: The question we would need to know from the committee is what members want us to be doing in the meantime, before the April meeting. Perhaps the steering committee can give some thought to that more specifically, if it wishes to do so.

I guess the things we have heard so far are that it would be interesting to know what other jurisdictions have been doing by way of official reports or innovations in the specific areas that have been outlined. We could also survey research literature on these questions. Again, we are going to be hearing from experts, so that may be a bit premature.

We can certainly look at competing educational philosophies in these issues, but again we are going to be hearing a lot of that, so that may not be what the committee needs. I guess we need some sense of the direction you would like us to be going ahead with before the next meeting. It could be that there is nothing you need before then, and then we will see.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I do not think there is anything we need before the meeting, but I see no reason why research cannot start the two major aspects at this stage. One would be a literature review. Even if we are going to have people coming as academics to give us their points of view and their expertise on it, I prefer to have that kind of information as a background before I have that discussion with people. You start off on some kind of knowledge basis that allows you to

have as intelligent a question as you can muster. Sometimes nobody notices the difference, but there you go.

The other thing is that I think it is really important for us to start the review of what is going on in other jurisdictions around the things that we will be doing in the fall. If we get a chance to have a look at that before we meet in the summer as a steering group and circulate it to individual members, and then the steering group discusses it or whatever, we might be able to decide what we want more information on or what impact that might have on some travel or some people we would like to invite to hearings in the fall. I think it would be wise to have that done in this period—April, May, June.

The other thing we discussed this morning, which is not for you to do at the moment, but it is to do with what would be accumulated in the summer presumably, is that the Ministry of Education is listing responses to Radwanski at this point, and perhaps we could get some kind of a synopsis of those responses in our hands. Because a number of issues will obviously be similar to what we are dealing with, that would be a useful thing. As Mr. Reyecraft said this morning, he did not see having access to the information as a problem, but I would want it in a fairly concise format, rather than having copies of all the briefs and that kind of thing. I think a number of the groups will want to send us copies of their briefs anyhow, but if we had the kinds of recommendations and major concerns that were being expressed by groups in response to Radwanski for us some time during the summer, that would be useful.

I think there would be no reason not to start the other two things right off the bat.

Madam Chairman: I think Mr. Gardner has indicated by his nods that he will go ahead with the literature review, a summary of ministerial responses in a very brief fashion and also a summary of the group responses to Radwanski.

1120

Mr. Keyes: Probably they are there, but as we are taking this fairly wide-ranging look at the philosophy, I wonder if the researchers might go back and look at the agendas of the most recent first ministers of education conferences to review their agendas to see whether they did look at some of these issues. I have a whole other ball game to play in that whole business of education across Canada with first ministers, but I think just a review of the agendas might say whether there was something in there they had dealt with.

At the same time you might, I hope, find from each of the provincial ministries across Canada, what are some of their most current studies—again only from the standpoint of a listing; I do not want them all—a listing of the type of studies they are undertaking and other problems at the moment that give them the greatest concern. I think that as we look at education, we have to keep in mind how fluid our population is across this country and see what is of concern to other jurisdictions in today's society.

Then perhaps we could have a listing of the current studies that have been commissioned by the ministry and are under way. I am not aware of them, but the one by Radwanski came out, and there may be two or three others. An anticipated time of when they are going to report would be worth while, not that we would wait for them.

There might be, as I found out on the weekend, some excellent task forces on specific topics that are being done. I found out that the large school boards of Ontario have a major task force on technical education. I found a great interest in that because that is one of the areas I wanted to deal with on this committee. They have been working for six or eight months on it and have just about completed their study.

Mr. Jackson: The ministry has one that has been going on for two and a half years.

Mr. Keyes: Yes. The ministry has one as well. My point is, let us look at what is out there from all these other interest groups that are relevant to these topics we are looking at, so we can be awaiting them, or so we may in our own context have contact with those people indirectly. That way we will finally have a much better knowledge base from which to work. They are the ones that I want. That is quite a wide-ranging area. I would appreciate it.

Mrs. O'Neill: Certainly when we invite these people who are suggested on the list that has just been distributed, we can suggest it, and they no doubt will provide us with any information on studies.

When Mr. Johnston is talking about a review of the literature, I am wondering just how far back we go, or if we can decide on that. If we talk about current literature on the goals of education, is it realistic to go back five years? Personally, I would suggest two. This is such a broad area, and I think if we are doing a literature search or a periodical search, we should just confine ourselves to the goals of education, where we are starting. I do not think we can just take lists of everything that has been said about education, or

even some of the things that are going to be there the four weeks in September.

I would like us also, maybe along the same lines as Mr. Keyes talked about, to ask the other ministries of the other provinces whether they have done any such study in the last four or five years and if they have, if we could have an executive summary of that.

It seems to me when we put our researchers to work we should really be conscious of being as specific as possible in what we want them to turn up, because this whole area is so broad we can just be totally swamped by paper that will not be helpful and will not help us to interpret and see if what the people are saying to us falls into this context or does not. That is my concept. Mr. Johnston, maybe you want to respond to what you mean by current literature.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I would prefer to leave the professional decision-making in terms of what seems to be relevant and useful to us to our professional researchers. Seeing the work they have done in the past with respect to that, we know they are capable of doing that; number one. Number two, if they have problems with it, they will tell us and give us the problems that are there.

Rather than trying to put specific date earmarks on it or even saying that just the philosophical concerns are there, if there is something really current that is found that is dealing with the questions of when people in other jurisdictions make decisions in the school system about their streaming, that would obviously be a useful thing for us to have as well.

I think the easiest way, and the way we have done it in the past, is to let them do the basic review. If they start to have real problems in terms of the quantities and the categorization, then they come back to the steering committee and say: "This is way too big. You'll never read half of this. There's no point in our doing this."

Madam Chairman: Before I turn it over to Mr. Gardner, I just wanted to bring up a point the clerk has made. The contact list is a rough draft. She had intended to vet some of it at noon and possibly make a few eliminations and a few additions. Keep in mind that this is not a finalized list, it is just a point of reference. Mr. Gardner, would you like to comment?

Mr. Gardner: If we can take away the direction that our literature review is to look at what experts in other jurisdictions have been saying about the goals of education in relation to the specific theme we have been talking about here, and that is in relation to social equality and

what is the link between the educational system and promoting equality, and then look at the impact of various concrete measures, curricula and other measures of the schools in relation to that goal, that will be sufficient direction.

We will not be looking at all the possible goals of education but only the goals the committee has chosen to focus on and the particular measures and innovations, both here and in other jurisdictions, that are related to that goal.

If that is the committee's understanding, I think we can certainly go away with that. That is specific enough for us, and then, as Mr. Johnston says, we can come back to the steering committee should we need direction on how far to go back and where to look. Frankly, I do not think that will be a problem.

The other question Mr. Keyes was mentioning, basically about a more general search of other jurisdictions for what they consider to be key issues and what is on the go in different areas, is a different matter. If the committee wishes that at this time, we can certainly do that. It may be that it would come up through the hearings and you may wish to wait until then. That is up to you.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It strikes me that that is a useful thing to get. It also strikes me that it would be useful before we do the September hearings, but not before we do the July hearings. What do you think?

Mr. Keyes: I do not object to that. You can only ask them to do so much. I think you have to take the priority from them. I just feel that the more background we have about those issues we are dealing with, the better it is, to be aware of Canada-wide concerns.

Mr. Jackson: There is not going to be any want of paper. It may put Bill 30 to shame in terms of the total content involved in this.

Mr. Keyes: I would not be surprised, because it is broader, in a sense. Interest is much wider from the groups, rather than the specificity of the last occasion.

Madam Chairman: Any other comments about the contact list?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Picking up something that was said this morning by Mrs. O'Neill, of course we want to try to add in the chambers and manufacturers' associations and that kind of thing.

Mr. Reyecraft: I note that three boards of education are included in the list. I question the wisdom of doing that. It seems to me we are obligated to notify the umbrella bodies, the board

organizations, but unless we are going to deal with all boards of education in the province, I do not understand why we would deal with just three: Metro separate, Metro and the board of education for the city of Toronto.

I also wonder whether or not we need to include the departments of education of universities.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The education faculty that came from me was just on the notion that we presume often that the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education is the only place we can go for some of the opinion on educational thought and a lot of the issues around that. I thought it might be useful to get these others. There are not many faculties, just a handful.

Mr. Keyes: Five.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Is it five? Something like that. I just thought if we informed them of what we are doing, that would probably be what we want. We may not want necessarily to invite them to make submissions unless they chose to, but to specifically let them know it was going on.

I agree with your comments about the particular boards that have been mentioned. Metro boards are often given an undue priority.

1130

Mr. Keyes: One group I had the pleasure to work with for some time started out as a group of representatives across the province who were principals, primarily in the secondary field and a few of us in the elementary one as well. It became known as Schools in the World of Work, and some of the people on this side will know Terry Clifford, who is now a federal member from London. He was part of it, I was from Kingston, and Sarnia was represented. I think we had 15 of the major schools. It all had to do with the transition of young people from schools into the world of work.

Since then, it has now transformed slightly and is called BIN, Building Interschool Networks. It is still a group of all these schools. They are interconnected by computer now so that every school that is a member of the group—and we now have some 50 or 60—can get information on any program a school runs which is innovative and helps to integrate young people into the world of work. It is all on a central database at the University of Western Ontario, Althouse College. Many of you would know the names of the people who are on there if I read them out to you, because they are outstanding principals in their own area. I would like to see them added to the

group, if you would consider them being made part of it.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. If other members of the committee have suggestions that they think of later on, could you direct them to a member of the subcommittee? Certainly, we could bring that up as an addition.

Mrs. O'Neill: The university departments of education are here but there does not seem to be anything here regarding colleges, and I feel rather strongly that the community colleges are the group that is often neglected when we are talking about goals of education. It would be most interesting if we had somebody even from the Ontario Council of Regents for Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, their umbrella group, to come and talk to us about their goals of education, because that is one of the systems we are no doubt leading into.

Another thing I find quite discriminatory is that the Ontario Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities is the only member on here, other than perhaps the Ontario Association for the Mentally Retarded, that has any representation on special education advisory committees. We likely have, I think, across this province 25 different groups that in one way or another, or in one board or another, are on SEACs, including the association for the bright children, the hearing-impaired, the vision-impaired, those with head injuries—it goes on and on. Whether we want to get into that, I do not know, but I do know that it is discriminatory to pick only one of those. I leave that for other decisions.

I would like to ask if we intend to have translation so French groups can present in their own language. Do we intend to arrange that for these presentations?

Madam Chairman: I think that is understood.

Mrs. O'Neill: OK. The French-language education councils, as far as I know, do not have a provincial organization. They tend to be units on school boards that are represented in different ways. There is a question mark beside that and I would certainly continue to put the question mark on how you want to invite them. I suggest it is likely through their trustees' organization. I certainly agree with what Mr. Reycraft said: there is no reason to invite three school boards if we are not going to invite them all.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The other thing is that at some point, when we raise the community-college question, we really do have to decide

about the university-level organizations as well because we have to look at education as a continuum. They obviously have as much concern, in terms of access to their system, around issues like streaming and that kind of thing, as do others, and whether or not we are producing graduates with the right skills for going on with the kind of streaming that we have.

So we may want to look at adding to our list, at least of information going out, although not necessarily expecting back input on the theoretical side of things—maybe more in the hearings in the fall—the Council of Ontario Universities, the faculty associations and maybe even somebody from the advisory committee to the minister on it. We may want somebody from the other end of things, early childhood education, if we can find an appropriate umbrella body. But, again, perhaps what we as a steering committee are going to have to do with all this is look at these to say, OK, which ones? Maybe we can have two kinds of letters go out.

Mr. Mahoney: It's probably easier to advertise.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Exactly. Ms. Mellor loves writing letters; it is not a problem. We can have two kinds of letters go out: one which is very specifically imploring their participation, and the other which is not shutting it off and is making people aware of what we are really up to so these others may pick and choose when they want to come in.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. Other comments? Actually, I am quite impressed with what we have reached consensus on today. Unless there are any other viewpoints that people would like to bring forward at this time, I would suggest that we adjourn, that the steering committee will meet throughout March and early April and there will be—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Not on a daily basis.

Madam Chairman: "Not on a daily basis," Mr. Johnston says. When we do have a consensus from the steering committee on a number of issues brought up this morning, the clerk will advise you of the meeting date for the entire committee in April.

Mrs. O'Neill: Is that the date on which you will finally decide the groups we are going to invite—and I like Mr. Johnston's idea of two kinds of invitations? Is that when we will make that decision, in April?

Madam Chairman: Yes. There will be a very detailed report from the subcommittee. We will be voting or else achieving consensus on all of

the items, and one of them will be the contact list and the type of letters that go out.

Mr. Keyes: I did not want to throw a curve at all of us at the very last, but just to keep everyone thinking: one group we might look at, though it is usually under federal jurisdiction, is the native group. What about the role of education with regard to our native peoples in Ontario? We do not touch them anywhere in anything we have looked at here. We have now touched on our two founding races, but we still hold a large responsibility for the education of our native students in northern Ontario and we have not touched on them all.

I have had a chance to do visitation to some of the schools in the north. I think it is very significant as you sit and listen to them up there as to their views about education and their transition to the world of work. I wonder if we can just for a moment expand and think about whether there is even an opportunity for them to make a representation to us in that area.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is a good point, and one which actually has further ramifications in terms of multiculturalism, especially when we get to look at streaming and what in fact happens to most native kids and to significant proportions of specific cultural groups in society. I think it is a good point.

The difficulty will, again, be perhaps solved by the notion of having a couple of different kinds of lists. We can go to the chiefs, we can go to the Metis and nonstatus Indians, and specifically the women's organizations there would probably be quite useful to us in determining whether or not we are going to ask for and put it on the philosophical section or just want to make sure they are well aware, well in advance of our hearings in the fall.

Mr. Keyes: There is nothing here that would indicate we would ever have touched them.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Yes, so I think that adding those and adding some of the multicultural groups and trying to figure out how we can limit ourselves, or how we separate it, would be important.

Madam Chairman: Maybe Mr. Miclash could provide us with the names of some of the groups in that regard so that we could choose a representation.

Mr. Keyes: You can get them right up on Avenue Road.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: You do not want to include the natives as well on the reserves, which are totally under federal jurisdiction. We would

want to make sure that when you look at the fact that there is only a 10 per cent graduation rate out of most of the isolated northern reserves, it is something you should be concerned about.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. Unless there are any other comments, we will adjourn until some time in April.

The committee adjourned at 11:38 a.m.

CONTENTS

Tuesday, March 1, 1988

Organization	E-27
Adjournment	E-43

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

- Chairman:** Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)
Vice-Chairman: Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)
Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)
Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)
Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)
Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)
Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)
Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)
O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)
Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)

Clerk: Mellor, Lynn

Staff:

- Gardner, Dr. Robert J. L., Assistant Chief, Legislative Research Service
Porter, Ann, Research Officer, Legislative Research Service



No. E-3

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Select Committee on Education
Organization

First Session, 34th Parliament
Wednesday, April 13, 1988

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario
Editor of Debates: Peter Brannan

CONTENTS

Contents of the proceedings reported in this issue of Hansard appears at the back, together with a list of the members of the committee and other members and witnesses taking part.

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues can be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at (416) 965-2159.

Hansard subscription price is \$16.00 per session, from: Sessional Subscription Service, Information Services Branch, Ministry of Government Services, 5th Floor, 880 Bay Street, Toronto, M7A 1N8. Phone (416) 965-2238.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Wednesday, April 13, 1988

The committee met at 3:40 p.m in committee room 2.

ORGANIZATION

Madam Chairman: I see a quorum, so I think we will get started. You have a very brief agenda before you. It does not mean that our substance will be brief, but at least the number of items is brief. I thought I would start off with the report of the subcommittee, and then if there is any discussion on the items members can bring it up at this time. The three members of the subcommittee who are here right now can certainly elaborate on the reasons for this report. That means that if we have made any mistakes, they are responsible.

The subcommittee met on a number of occasions, and the report you have in front of you is the consensus of those meetings. I do not think we ended up having any matters which were not resolved by consensus, so it was surely a co-operative effort. Starting with the July hearings, these are the hearings that were going to be on the goals and philosophy of education, by invitation only. We started off looking for two applicable weeks in July. It was very quickly narrowed down to July 18 and July 25 by the fact that there is a major trustee conference and a major teachers' conference in the first two weeks of July. Does anybody have any problem with those particular dates in July?

Mr. Reycraft: Any dates that we try to establish now as a committee are subject to approval of the House leaders and whips and should be regarded as conditional on obtaining that approval. However, those people being reasonable individuals, I am quite sure they will see things our way.

Madam Chairman: Thank you for bringing up that point. I am sure that Mr. Reycraft and Mr. Cooke will protect our interests at that meeting, but we will consider all dates as tentative until we have confirmation from the whips and House leaders. Monday to Thursday, 10 o'clock to 12 noon, 12:30 where necessary, and starting again at two o'clock, to five o'clock. You will notice there is a provision that if extra scheduling time is required, extra sittings will be on Friday. The clerk will be offering a half-hour appointment,

scheduling as many appointments per day as is deemed reasonable.

Is there any discussion so far? I see several members looking very puzzled.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am looking for the radio.

Madam Chairman: Oh, that is Hansard.

Mr. Reycraft: Are you sure you do not have the ball game on?

Madam Chairman: Do you have a ball game there?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: All the members should have to open their briefcases and put out their transistor radios. I think there is no doubt about that.

Madam Chairman: First checking the score before doing so.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I thought the game was not until tonight myself, but I am never on top of these things.

Madam Chairman: Good, I am glad your puzzlement was not from what I was reading.

The clerk will be offering half-hour appointments, scheduling as many appointments per day as deemed necessary. All appointments should be in Toronto. This is again for the invitation-only section, the two weeks in July. The letters of invitation are to be mailed by the end of April. The ministry should be invited to appear the first Monday morning. In the subcommittee we did not specifically clarify what we meant by "ministry." I assume it is the deputy minister or the assistant deputy minister, particular staff.

The clerk has just advised me that it is the minister's decision. Is it the will to leave it up to the minister?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is a major challenge for him, but I think we should leave it up to him.

Madam Chairman: I think he will be able to live up to that challenge, but thank you.

The research staff should prepare a summary of presentations for consideration by each caucus before the September hearings. That would be a summary of recommendations from the July session, from the presentations. Are there any comments so far?

The September hearings will start on Monday, September 12, which is a week after Labour Day,

not the week immediately following Labour Day; Monday to Thursday, the same times as in the July hearings. There will be three weeks of public hearings and one week to write the report. The proposed travel is to Ottawa, Sudbury, Thunder Bay and Windsor, as may be required by response to the advertising. Obviously, if there is very little response from a particular centre, we might either change the centre or fit in more hearings in Toronto.

Mr. Furlong: If I might comment on that, if a half-hour appointment means 10 groups per day, and if 10 groups would prefer to be heard in Durham region and the town of Whitby, is the committee prepared to meet in the town of Whitby? It is a problem.

Madam Chairman: Part of the problem, I think, would be in Hansard and in many of the facilities we have here. Are there any other comments?

Mr. Furlong: If they can set up Hansard in Ottawa and in Windsor they can set it up in Whitby. Translation services are also available at the municipal offices. My objection is that it is always people on the outskirts of Toronto—I do not know where Kingston is going to go; I guess Ottawa or Toronto. It is always, "Come to Toronto." I think we should maybe go out and visit some of the other people. If we are going to spend most of our time in Toronto, I think it will deter some people from making submissions.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I respect the member's opinion, but my experience in committee is that holding committee hearings in Toronto on matters like education does not deter people coming long distances to get here. Where major costs get involved, we can assist those people to come. The kind of thing you are talking about, unless we were going to travel to almost every town in Ontario—that is something virtually incomprehensible for somebody from northern Ontario in terms of the desire of people from Whitby.

We are talking about holding hearings in Sudbury and Thunder Bay. I ask you to think about people who are living in Fort Frances in terms of their sympathy towards a notion like people from Whitby finding it difficult to get here. The member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren) would want me to refer to people having to come to Sudbury for meetings, or people from places like Shining Tree or Moosonee having to come down to Sudbury or Toronto. Unless we are going to spend a fortune and spend all our time travelling within the province, you have to use Toronto and a selection of other regional

centres as a place for people to come. You cannot go to all the communities. It is just not possible.

Mr. Furlong: I am not suggesting we go to all communities. I am suggesting that if you take in the whole Toronto area it does not necessarily mean Queen's Park. I guess that is all I am saying. In the region of Durham, we have a population about one quarter of that of Toronto, and there are as many groups there that might want to be heard. They always seem to be the ones who have to be inconvenienced and not the other way around.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Jackson, do you have a comment?

Mr. Jackson: The only thing I could contribute to the current discussion would have to do with the exorbitant parking rates facing these people who come to presentations at Queen's Park. I know that is not really germane to the points being raised, so I will pass.

Madam Chairman: Thank you for those comments.

1550

Mr. Reycraft: The purpose of having the committee travel is to make it reasonably accessible to people all over this province. It is deemed that, by going to certain centres in the various regions of the province, we can do that. I think it is pretty difficult to mount a strenuous argument that Queen's Park is not reasonably accessible to those people who live within the Golden Horseshoe.

Mr. Jackson: When I get to University Avenue, I cannot find a parking spot. That is why I made the point. Mr. Furlong makes a very good point if he had also raised how ridiculous it is once people get here. All we do is sit here and we see them stand in front of us; we do not hear half the story of the ordeal they went through to get here.

Mr. Reycraft: Mr. Jackson has raised a very legitimate concern. Quite frankly, those who come from my part of the province, southwestern Ontario, find that by parking near the western extreme of the subway line—

Mr. Jackson: Out in Mimico, then they can get here.

Mr. Reycraft: —they can then travel for the price of \$1.05 right to Queen's Park and they avoid those exorbitant parking charges.

Madam Chairman: Any other comments?

I am not sure I see a consensus. I see a number of different—

Mr. Jackson: I do. You are doing fine, Madam Chairman. What is the next point?

Madam Chairman: OK. I gather, then, that we will be meeting at Queen's Park. The proposed travel to Ottawa was going to be for two days, and one day to each of the other centres. As I say, that depends on the demand in the area. The clerk would again be offering half-hour appointments and scheduling as many appointments as deemed reasonable per day.

Simultaneous interpretation could be provided in the Ottawa and Sudbury regions if the committee visits those communities. I say "if" again, contingent on the demand from those areas for presentation.

Is there any discussion about other areas in which French may be required? Ottawa and Sudbury seem to be the consensus of the committee as to which ones require the French translation.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: You also said that people who were coming from other areas who needed French translation should come here or we should pay for their travel to go to places like Sudbury or Ottawa. I am thinking of some of the people who might be from, say, the northwest, etc., where there are French communities.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Johnston has made a very good point. Translation apparently is extremely expensive, so we are going to try to make other efforts at accommodation rather than setting up full translation services in every centre.

Upon request, simultaneous interpretation should also be provided in Toronto. Interpretation should be provided upon request to those needing assistance when making an oral presentation to the committee. This would obviously be for someone who is visually or hearing-impaired.

One person of any group could be provided with travel expenses upon request, again subject to approval by the chair. That is only if a group actually asks for travel expenses.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The reason for doing that is that you often will have an organization that has five or six members of its executive or whatever who would like to come, and if the committee starts paying for all of those costs they get quite large. It does not stop them from bringing other people, but the usual tradeoff we have is to provide money for one.

Madam Chairman: All public hearings should start at the appointed hour with or without a quorum to ensure that there is as little inconvenience to the witnesses as possible. I am

going to adhere very strictly to the time lines of starting at 10 o'clock and two o'clock. I have said if the chairman herself is tardy that the vice-chairman would be more than welcome to fill in. That is an incentive for me to be here.

Letters of information should be mailed by the end of April or as soon as possible after that date. Both the letter of invitation, which I referred to earlier, and the letter of information are attached, so perhaps this is an opportune time to take a look at those.

First, the letter of invitation for July: if you would like to take a moment and just glance through that; and if you have any comments, amendments, deletions or changes, I think this would be the best time to bring them up.

The letter of invitation will be going to those on the list immediately following the letter of invitation. The contact list for the letter of invitation has organizations grouped by category. Perhaps we will also take a look at that at the same time. We do have one name that was on the original list and somehow, through the miracles of a word processor or something, it was deleted on the final list. That is the Ontario Association of Alternative and Independent Schools.

Mrs. O'Neill: I think I was the person who talked to you when we were just putting on the Ontario Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities. That other has been broadened considerably, but I guess what concerns me is that special education advisory committees have as their members only provincial organizations. The question, for instance, came up in the House today on deaf children. The deaf children's parents do have an association. Because only provincial organizations are on SEACs in this province, I think we should include all of those that qualify.

I think there are about 12 of them other than the hearing impaired. There is also the brain damaged. They may not want to present, but I feel if we are going to do it for five or six of them we should do it for the 10 or 12 of them that are recognized by this province.

Madam Chairman: Perhaps we will open up discussion on this.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Why are we limiting it at this point?

Madam Chairman: I guess the reason for limiting it to a certain extent was simply that we are under such tight time lines. We ran into this in a number of areas and eliminated some of the groups we perhaps would have liked to hear from. You are suggesting that there be an extra four or five in this group?

Mrs. O'Neill: All I am suggesting is that we contact the ministry. Anybody who has been recognized for membership on the SEAC has to be a provincial organization; they cannot just be from that one community. That is a condition of membership on a SEAC. I think this is discriminatory to others who have been given membership on a SEAC. I offer it as a suggestion. I do not think many of them will want to present, but I feel they have a right.

Madam Chairman: To be given the opportunity. Mr. Reyecraft, do you have any comments?

Mr. Reyecraft: I do not think there would be any objection. The consensus we developed in the committee revolves around those groups. There may be other groups that Mrs. O'Neill has not mentioned that we were not aware of when we put together our list.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: We may get ourselves in trouble for leaving some groups off as we have tried to put together these lists. I think it is a good suggestion to check with the ministry; and perhaps besides the written invitation, when we are talking with those groups we should emphasize to them that they will have a shot to come in the fall to talk in specifics and that kind of thing. They may be much more likely to come to that kind of session than they would be to the other general philosophical questions.

Madam Chairman: We will certainly check that out with the ministry.

Mrs. O'Neill: I think Mr. Whittaker of the Ministry of Education would be the person you could get the information from the fastest.

Interjection.

Mrs. O'Neill: I could do it, I suppose.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Copy their list.

Mrs. O'Neill: I was thinking of someone else who could likely do it, too.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Could we go for a second to the letter of invitation? I do not know whether you wanted to try to deal with it. You said we could deal with it. My only difficulty is in the second paragraph, and it has been something which has happened a little bit in committee. I was really nervous about the scope of discussion in July. I thought it was understood that we were not going to be able to deal with all the philosophical underpinnings of the system, and this would seem to suggest that the groups would be coming in to talk about all of those things, when we are rather trying to talk about it in terms of the whole question of social equality and that kind of a role for the education system and what

is the extent of the philosophical role of education in those terms.

1600

I would be concerned that a lot of people seeing this would come in talking about an awful lot of other goals besides the notion of issues around social equality and what the role of education is in that. If that is the case, they would not be focusing in so much on the things that we are then going to be moving to deal with in September but on things we will be dealing with a long, long way away. We would maybe be better to bring them in to deal with those philosophical underpinnings at that time.

I was wondering whether there was a consensus in the committee to try to tighten the language a little bit around that. I do not know what the right words are, I am sort of fishing as well around this notion of education as a social equalizer.

Mr. Jackson: And access.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Yes. I think people would be able then to come before the committee and talk more specifically to that, because we are going to be very specifically trying to look at that from our perspective. If they spend half of their briefs talking about a lot of other pedagogical principles and those kinds of things that underlie the education system and then all we ask our questions around are the things around social equality, they will feel they have wasted a lot of time and energy dealing with those things.

Mrs. O'Neill: I think there are a couple of things on what we are directing the research to look for in the first two sections. That is where we stuck to that idea, and then we went on to the things we want to hear about in September. If we could get a sentence out of those first two paragraphs—

Madam Chairman: First of all, before we proceed, do we have a consensus that the goals and philosophy will be more or less—I do not want to use the word “limited”—perhaps focused towards education as a social equalizer?

Mr. Jackson: No. That was an add-on to the original request I made. Since this was my request that we deal with it, I want it to be more specific. Let me back up.

Given the area we have to cover, the amount of information we have to cover over the next two or three years, for us to step immediately into it in any one specific area would be inappropriate unless we put in context today what we feel is the sum total of the varying philosophies and goals in education and how they impact on a government

which must make sense and order out of that through the Ministry of Education.

The question is raised more from the point of view of what is our approach to education. That has priority. What do we believe we are supposed to be teaching our children and for what purpose? These are the elements we were looking for, and to get agreement between our two systems, and now according to Bill 109 the three systems, that are in operation in this province.

That question has never been asked. It implies a heck of a lot more than just whether it is a social equalizer. I fully concur with and wish to explore that as fully as possible, but if this committee expects to go and undertake the massive amount of work we are about to do without first putting in perspective what we expect of education, now and in the future, then we will go nowhere.

I think that one sentence does not achieve that. I do not believe it is of any relevance that we have met twice to discuss things. I think we should enlighten people that we now realize our task will be an ambitious one and will be an extensive one. In order for us to achieve a degree of success, we feel the first step is to give all major organizations in this province an opportunity to comment on what their perception is of the role of government in terms of reinforcing the fundamental goals and principles for education. That is their first entering salvo: how they think the government should be approaching education. Then we get into the various details.

I think whatever we can convey, this is the first step which sets the framework. We may come away from our first two weeks and find out we have three separate systems in terms of philosophy and goals, regardless of funding. We know there are three separate systems in terms of funding. We have to understand the goals; to the extent that we can achieve it, that may be one of the most important elements of the work we do. For what it is worth, the issue of its being a social equalizer will naturally flow from those discussions.

Madam Chairman: So you feel it is very important not to place any limitation at all and to let people just come and give their own goals and philosophies of education so that we are not limited in any way.

Mr. Jackson: I think the task before us is to approve a letter, to say whether we think it is sufficient or deficient. I submit that it is deficient in terms of putting a weighted factor on this element of the committee's activities, and we should convey that in a letter as written. I think

we should devote more attention to putting it in context.

This is a critical first step, that the committee hear and listen and not presume what the educational philosophy is for a multicultural Ontario in the late 1980s and into the 1990s, because no one has asked that question. We are the first group ever to do it. That is the point I am stressing.

As for being open to everything that they will bring forward to us, yes. It is a challenge for research and the clerk to help put that in some order, but I do not want to imply just, "Come and tell us what you think the philosophies and goals of education are." It is essential that we try to put that in perspective before we start listening to streaming, standardized testing, funding, the length of the school day or anything else that we are going to be talking about over the next three to four years.

Mr. Reycraft: I have listened to Mr. Jackson and, quite frankly, I am somewhat confused about what he is objecting to or proposing we do as a committee. I think there is a need to focus to the greatest extent possible on what it is we are going to do in these first two weeks of the committee's deliberations.

It was my understanding that we would undertake a review of the goals of the educational system in this province. Those goals are enunciated by the ministry. They were established many years ago and are in need of review. That is one of the things that was pointed out in the Radwanski report. Perhaps we could focus on those goals, entertain submissions on those and undertake discussion of them. That might be one way of focusing what it is we are going to do.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I really wonder what the outcome of the two weeks is going to be if we have a totally wide-open kind of discussion about the goals of education, because what we will get is a lot of discussion around a whole range of issues, whether it is who should run the school systems, whether there should be more than one public school system, all those things that we went through before with Bill 30. A lot of issues which we are not dealing with in September at all will be raised in a way in which, in the short presentations that people will be making to us, we will not get a chance to delve into in the kind of depth we would want. I just really wonder what we will come away with.

It seems to me that before we launch into any of the other areas that we package or group in the future, we are going to need to do the same kind of "What are the goals here?" review before we

look at the reality of each of those issues as people come before us, when we travel or whatever. I worry that in two weeks, and with short presentations trying to deal with all the goals of education and get people to deal with that in anything that is not a précis kind of oversimplification of people's ideas of all the implications of education for our society is a bit much. But if that is what the committee wants to do, then that is what we should do.

I just thought we were going to try to have a bit more of a focus than that, as we talked about the underpinnings, in order to lead into, if you like, streaming, groupings and things like that, which maybe have and maybe have not reinforced class distinction in the society and all those kinds of things. I had a sense there was a misunderstanding on this before, but I did not pick up on that as clearly as I am now doing.

1610

I just worry about how much time we are going to be spending talking about things such as what is the proper way to elect a school board and getting into the representation-by-population kinds of things we are now dealing with in legislation and issues like that, which are underpinnings of education in terms of who should administer what parts of education, or the funding of education in general, or the aspect of whether private schools should be part of a public funding system and all those other large issues that are out there for us to deal with, when those things are not going to be as directly applicable to these things we are trying to discuss this fall.

Mr. Jackson: To respond, we have heard from Mr. Reyecraft that there is a philosophy and there are goals in education that can be articulated by the minister. Based on that suggestion, I recommend that on our first day, or even prior to the official hearings, we get a full briefing from the Ministry of Education to the whole committee on the current philosophy and goals of education in Ontario as perceived by the ministry today.

We did this on Bill 30. We have done it on many bills that we have worked on in the social development committee. I would propose that.

Madam Chairman: That is part of the proposal, that the ministry come the first day.

Mr. Jackson: Perhaps they can provide some focus to that. I do not see the discussion on the philosophy and goals of education to be a matter that can lack a lot of clarity. I will put it in perspective as I see it. Through the Radwanski report and other public statements by politicians,

we have references to "back to basics", that schools should help our youth and be designed to prepare people for work. We have a conflicting philosophy which says that we develop the intrinsic strengths within our young people in terms of their thinking skills and their ability to rationalize and the ability to interact in society. That is a significantly different goal and philosophy to education.

We now have two official public systems in this province. That should be put in perspective. Quite frankly, a school system which has been designed entirely to prepare young people for work is quite inappropriate and somewhat obscure for our special-ed children. To what extent are we satisfying the unique mission and philosophy of the separate system in this province in terms of the education it provides? It is distinct. It is distinct for a reason. The minister is able to articulate that.

I believe these are the kinds of items we should be discussing. And we have francophone rights now, which may have a differing philosophy and different goals. I think those should be put in perspective. The degree to which all three systems can act as social equalizers to provide all opportunities in the public systems, now that they have access to three in this province, should be discussed and made known.

I think that through the discipline of the chair we are going to be able to say to groups that want to get talking about the details of how you elect a trustee—which is not as relevant as what it is the school boards provide for the children of this province—I think we can keep them on focus; but I think somebody had better put in some form a document where we as the government of this province have discussed it.

I am not nervous about the two-week exercise, but I am nervous about our proceeding on a fundamental point about Radwanski, about moving towards a system that prepares kids for jobs when we may hear very clearly that this is not the philosophy of education for this province.

Madam Chairman: I seem to be hearing two quite different expectations of what the July hearings are going to accomplish. I think Mr. Johnston feels it is a prelude to the September hearing, and Mr. Jackson, and to a certain extent Mr. Reyecraft, think of it more as a global direction for our committee over the next number of years.

Mrs. O'Neill: Yesterday, we had another publication go out, which I am sure is also going to be responded to in these hearings, making quite sweeping, I consider, statements about

education. There are likely going to be two others before we actually go into the July hearings. I certainly see a need for some program, even if it is just transition to adulthood, preparing people to live, not work. In other words, I think we should try to focus this section on the student. If we have to do that with words, then we have to do it with words. I do not even want to get very much into the—it is hard for me to say this, but I do not want to get into adult philosophies of education.

I want to get into philosophies where we are talking about what is necessary to develop students. I do not want to hear so much about preserving cultures as I want to hear about that which will be in the schools to help students become better adults or live more fulfilling lives. Culture will come into that, as likely will religion. I am trying to say let us try, if we can with words, to focus this examination of philosophy and goals on students, which I think up to this point the ministry has done.

I agree with Mr. Reycraft. Those things that came down in the late 1970s and early 1980s—primary 1, junior 1, formative years—all that stuff likely needs to be looked at again. No doubt these people will tell us that, but certainly my experience in the community I represent is that the French-language schools and the English-language schools, even on the same board, have always developed their own sets of goals and philosophies and have always had their own manuals.

We are going to get varied opinions, but let us try to focus them as much as possible on students, the development of their potential and, if necessary, their direction towards a satisfying life career.

Madam Chairman: You see a need to qualify that specifically in the letter of invitation?

Mrs. O'Neill: That is the discussion we have had every day, and we are the people who are sort of going over this with a microscope. If we cannot decide, then can you imagine sending this letter out to a whole bunch of people who have not been part of this discussion? I feel we have to put something in there, if people are in agreement with me, to indicate that we want to focus on the student and the development of that student to his full potential. Maybe people do not agree, but that seems to be the perception people in the community are having, that we are not doing justice to the student, or the student is not competing well in international and national level testing. I would like to hear some responses

to that from people in the community because I am not sure everybody believes that.

Madam Chairman: Do other members have comments? I think we have finally reached something on which we do not have consensus. I suppose the proper procedure at this stage is to send it back to the subcommittee.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: May I suggest at the moment that we get back to doing other things that we do have consensus on. Let us see what we have agreement on, and maybe we could even come back to this discussion in a little while and see if we can come up with something on it. If that does not work, then send it off to the steering committee to try to work it out. But let us go back to the things that unite and come back to the discord.

Madam Chairman: OK. We will leave this for the moment and go on to the next item. Since we are talking about the letter of invitation and have already started discussing the contact list, I think it may be appropriate if we finish dealing with that. Since the subcommittee approved this list we have had several requests for additions to it. As I mentioned, the Ontario Association of Alternative and Independent Schools was left off by mistake, so that will be added.

In addition, we have had a request from the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools, which is an umbrella group of 70 private Christian schools, to make a presentation. I understand from several of the members present that they believe this fits under the umbrella of the Ontario Association of Alternative and Independent Schools. If it is the will of the committee, I suggest we check that out. If they are part of the overall umbrella group, they can participate by funnelling it through the presentation of the Ontario Association of Alternative and Independent Schools. If they are not part of that group, they can be allowed to make a separate presentation. Does that seem reasonable? Did anybody understand what I said?

1620

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Yes.

Madam Chairman: I am not sure whether I was very clear.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I think that is the approach. If they are part of the larger umbrella group, then they should just come as part of that group and lobby to be part of that group's presentation, like a lot of the others are going to have to do. If they are not, then it sounds to me like they are a significant enough group to be included.

We are going to run into some problems in timing. I think there is little doubt about that, with the extras we have added from the special education advisory committees. I had a complaint from some of my labour friends because three business groups are being encouraged to come and speak on behalf of business. Only the Ontario Federation of Labour is allowed to be invited to this initial sendoff, although a lot of the labour councils and others are very involved in literacy programs and that kind of thing and wanted to be able to come. These are associations of labour councils from the province. I said to them that I did not think we would be able to have any extras and that therefore I was not going to raise their concerns.

As there may be a difference between the view of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and that of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, so there may be a difference of opinion between public sector unions and private sector unions in terms of what they think the goals of education are. That kind of diversity should be recognized in labour if we are going to do it in business. I said I would not raise this because I did not think we were going to be adding extras. Now I find we are potentially opening it up for at least six more people to come before us.

I really do worry about how we are going to fit everybody in to talk about the things we want during that two-week period.

Madam Chairman: After that comment, I am not sure I should even mention the other requests.

The Catholic Principals Council of Ontario apparently is a different group from the Ontario Catholic Secondary School Principals Association. Might I suggest that we use the same qualifier we have with the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools? If the Ontario Catholic Secondary School Principals Association is part of the same umbrella under the Catholic Principals Council of Ontario, perhaps they can join their presentations and make one. If they are entirely separate—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: They are separate, but I am sure we should encourage them to come together.

Mrs. O'Neill: While we are on this point, how will we determine it: first come, first served? There are at most 10 days, even if we extend it to the Fridays. So what do we do? Is there a cutoff? I guess that is what I am asking. Do you anticipate people will just be turned away?

Madam Chairman: If you are talking about by invitation only, it was estimated that we would have sufficient time to hear each of these

groups if we had a fairly tight time frame. Obviously, we have added six or seven since then, but we did the original time frame excluding Fridays. We have that to fall back on. I presume we will try to fit in every group that has received an invitation.

Mr. Reycraft: Does that mean we will have to reconsider the schedule for the other sittings that we have consensus on? We did that with a specific number of groups in mind. The number has now increased and we have to look at providing additional time.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: In other words, we may have to sit for an evening or whatever, besides the Friday.

Mr. Reycraft: Or start at nine and go until six.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: When are we sending these out?

Clerk of the Committee: Depending on the letter, I was hoping to get them out next week.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: They have lots of time to get back to us before we rise, so we should then have a pretty good idea of how jammed we are likely to be and whether we have to shift the agenda, but I suggest we leave the flexibility with the clerk to do so.

Clerk of the Committee: I think I will have a pretty good indication about two weeks after the letters go out whether or not we are going to run into a major time problem. Maybe I would not have an indication on the need of one or two evening sittings, but I certainly would know whether we were going to run into a major time problem.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: If you and the chair feel that it is something you cannot accommodate, that the numbers are going to be too much, if you get that indication I guess we should call together the steering group to make some changes in our recommendation, which would allow that flexibility here as a committee. Otherwise, I would leave it in your hands to make the minor adjustments.

Madam Chairman: That sounds fine.

Mr. Villeneuve: On a further point of clarification, I see we have quite a list of francophone organizations, among which is Fédération des élèves du secondaire franco-ontarien, which is a student body. I see no equal to it in English. I would like to see some of our students here. Do we have that on our list?

Madam Chairman: The Ontario Federation of Students.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: There is no secondary equivalent, however.

Madam Chairman: They are at the university level.

Mr. Villeneuve: I know we have some very bright children, student council people and what have you. Quite obviously, they do not have an entity unto themselves. Sometimes they can bring some very constructive suggestions, being part of the system. We sometimes look at peer groups. We have the teachers, parents, taxpayers and what have you, but students could bring a perspective that would be a little bit different.

Madam Chairman: I believe the Premier (Mr. Peterson) is having a reception for the presidents of the student councils at this very moment. Perhaps we should go and raid his larder.

Mrs. Cunningham: I think they have been re-established. It fell apart a couple of years ago. I think a student in London was made chairman in September, so it is working this year. It is something we should be checking out.

Madam Chairman: Perhaps the clerk can check that out. Certainly, if they have reactivated that group it would be appropriate to have a presentation.

Mrs. Cunningham: On a point of clarification, when you made reference earlier to special education advisory committees, is that the membership of the SEACs, all the groups that are involved across the province? Different municipalities, different school boards have different—I heard you talking about it in the beginning. There are quite a number. There are some 20 organizations.

Mrs. O'Neill: Each must be a provincial organization before it can be a member of any school board organization.

Mrs. Cunningham: So you are saying that if it is a provincial organization and we are not aware of it and it does apply, it will be heard?

Mrs. O'Neill: No. I mean they have to be represented on a board in Ontario, which they would be or they would not be on a SEAC.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Are you saying there are going to be 20, and not 12?

Mrs. Cunningham: There will be far more than 12. According to the act, school boards appoint 12. You may have 16 or 18 different groups now. I am not sure of the status of them, but I think most of them would be.

Mrs. O'Neill: Why do we not clarify that point?

Mrs. Cunningham: Yes, I think it has to be clarified. You can only appoint 12, so what they normally do is appoint the 12 and someone else will take a space if someone does not want it, but the others sit as observers. There are many more than 12.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: If that is the case, if it turns out that on the provincial list, if we could check that, there are more, then I think that has to come back to the chair, because we will probably have to reconsider our whole approach to that particular—

Mrs. Cunningham: That particular group.

Mr. Reyecraft: We are going to have to reduce the number of groups to which we are going to extend invitations.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Exactly, and maybe open up another option: that would be to suggest to some of these groups that they send us written information for this one even though they will not be invited to attend.

Mrs. O'Neill: The other thing we could do is devote a day to that particular kind of—

Madam Chairman: A third possibility is that we ask them to make a presentation together, the ones that have a common interest. I know the clerk is proposing to do that as far as the college faculties and schools of education are concerned. I think you are planning to notify the University of Toronto and to ask the other faculties to co-ordinate through the University of Toronto if they choose to participate. We might do the same thing with the SEAC groups.

The final possible addition I had to the contact list—Ken Keyes is unable to be here today because he is giving a speech in his riding, but he had mentioned in the organizational part in March that he wanted to have some sort of futurist who would come and talk about education vis-à-vis the new technology and high technology.

The Premier's Council has just released a report in which, as Mrs. O'Neill has pointed out, it refers to education quite extensively. If it were the will of the committee, perhaps we could have a member of the Premier's Council invited. Mr. Johnston has a funny look on his face.

1630

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Amused look; I am saving my funny looks for later. I am not sure I consider the Premier's Council futurist, or that Mr. Keyes necessarily would. In a sense, it would be a useful group to come before us because of what it is saying. It points up again the difficulty of the breadth of what we are talking

about in these two weeks. If we take their perspective on education, as enunciated in their report, I do not have any problem with their being invited. But I am not sure it meets Mr. Keyes's notion of a futurist. I presumed he was talking about a John Kettle type or someone. My own sense is that you could not invite somebody like that to this kind of session when we are limited so much in time. It just would not be appropriate to try to do that. If you want to add the Premier's Council to this group, that would be all right with me, I guess.

Madam Chairman: Any other comments?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: We have the report, though.

Mrs. O'Neill: I really think they would fit better into the second category in the September hearings if we want them to kick off the September hearings, simply because they are very specific. They have looked at charts, results of studies, results of examinations, international examinations. It is not really a philosophy as much as a judgement on the present system that seems to come out of this report. At least that is what I have been able to garner up to this point. I have not read every line of the report yet. Having talked to the minister about it, this seems to be his interpretation on the first glance of what is being said here. It is a one-stop look by some people at education right now. I do not think it goes to the philosophy, but I might be wrong.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: We can perhaps come to a consensus then not to invite them. If they wish to come in September when we have the open hearings, that would be fine.

Mrs. O'Neill: Even if we want to invite them to sort of kick off, we could do it at that point, but I really do not think it is right for these two weeks.

Madam Chairman: As Mr. Johnston very quickly pointed out, we seem to have a consensus between Mr. Johnston and Mrs. O'Neill which is relatively rare—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Let us grab it while we have it.

Madam Chairman: —so perhaps we should consider that to be a total consensus. Perhaps a letter of invitation for September; would that be appropriate?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Sure.

Mrs. O'Neill: It is a good idea.

Madam Chairman: Are there any other additions, deletions or comments about the

contact list? Speak now or I will leave the rest to your imagination. OK.

Let us go back to some of the other things on which we should probably be able to agree. You will see there is a letter of information towards the end. It is somewhere in here. As the clerk points out, it will have to correspond to whatever changes are made to the letter of invitation.

Interjection.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: There is a letter of invitation and then there is a letter of information which we send out to all the teachers' organizations, trustees' organizations, etc.

Madam Chairman: It is behind the French version of the advertisement.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Right.

Madam Chairman: Letter of information.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Can we leave that to discuss as we discuss the invitation so that the wording is similar around whatever we are doing on the philosophical—

Madam Chairman: Yes. The householder, I think, goes under the same provision. This is not required. It was just suggested we do a draft so that if members wish to publicize the hearings in their householder report, they would have the information before them. That again will undergo a revision.

Hansard will be provided for all meetings, except when the committee may be touring a facility. The report should be prepared in English and translated into French before tabling. English and French versions of the report should be printed independently. This is a matter of cost, because if we have them printed together, we might have to have the same number of French reports as English, and usually there is less demand for it.

The clerk has pointed out one of my many failings. I skipped a line. The ad, which is towards the back of the packet, will be appearing in all Ontario dailies once in June. The committee went through some soul-searching to find out the best date. We felt that the summer was not appropriate, because so many people would be away and would not see it. Early September would be too late, so we compromised on the latter part of June for the ad to appear in every daily in Ontario. I think it is something like 49 communities.

Clerk of the Committee: Forty-nine dailies, including Le Droit in Ottawa.

Madam Chairman: Forty-nine dailies across Ontario, which includes Le Droit in Ottawa.

Interjection: They are still on strike.

Interjection: Still?

Madam Chairman: One hopes that by the end of June, things will look up. They will need the advertising again.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: This is not on the process but on the wording of the second paragraph, where we are saying "wishing to comment on the organization of the education process relating to streaming, grade promotion, semestering and Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior." Did we wish to exclude primary level when we are starting to talk about the whole question of groupings and streaming? Was that intentional or am I misunderstanding what that means?

Madam Chairman: No, that is OSIS.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Oh, I see, that is OSIS.

Madam Chairman: That is OSIS all spelled out in big words. Did you want OSIS?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: If that is the case, then I would put OSIS in parentheses.

Mr. Reycraft: That may imply that grade promotion or semestering as well should be restricted to the secondary schools.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am just wondering, though, because of the way it is put there whether, if we do not put OSIS in parentheses, people might read it as I just read it, which would be eliminating the elementary panel, or a part of the elementary panel, would it not? Am I reading it incorrectly?

Mr. Reycraft: So if you just put OSIS in brackets after that, then you know what we were talking about.

Madam Chairman: Or you could even do it—

Mr. Reycraft: It seems there is just no end of difficulty with that document.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Am I wrong or is that going to make people in the primary level think there is no role for them on this?

Mrs. O'Neill: Why do not we just leave out OSIS? I do not know why we have to highlight it, because we have Ontario academic courses now as well.

Madam Chairman: Perhaps you would clarify what you meant by "leave out OSIS."

Mrs. O'Neill: Well, I mean it limits it. It seems to have a limiting effect. We have two other levels of education now, OACs and elementary.

Madam Chairman: I think OSIS is one of the original four topics that the full committee agreed

we would be discussing, because it has been a very controversial matter. Would it be a suggestion that we say, "streaming, grade promotion, semestering and OSIS;" and then in brackets put "Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior"? Most people seem to refer to it as OSIS.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That does not prevent you from talking about the other things in context, the other matters—

Mrs. Cunningham: We were talking about when this letter goes out. I would suggest it go out at the end of May.

Madam Chairman: Oh, sorry; the letters will be going out at the end of April. It is just the advertisement that appears in the newspaper that will go towards the end of June.

Mrs. Cunningham: I would say that one of the greatest criticisms is that most organizations are starting to disband at the beginning of June. Anybody who has anything to do with education, all these groups that are supportive, all these parents' groups and what not, are gone after May 24. I suggest an ad in the newspaper go as early as the beginning of June or the end of May.

1640

Madam Chairman: That is a good point.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Our debate was entirely about the problem of doing what we normally do, which would be putting the thing in during the summer or in September and so we moved it to June, but I do not see any particular difficulty with moving it back to the beginning.

Mr. Miclash: That is before school closes.

Mrs. Cunningham: Right, before they have their last meeting. All of these groups meet at the end of May or the first week of June.

Madam Chairman: So it should be early to mid-June then.

Mrs. Cunningham: At least, so it can be there for that last meeting in the first week of June.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The end of May or early June would do.

Mrs. Cunningham: Otherwise, they do not get together until after the kids are in school in September and we would be criticized.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The executive in power would be criticized.

Mrs. Cunningham: I am being helpful then.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: You are one of us now.

Mr. Miclash: I am wondering about the dailies. We have Ontario dailies. Is that normal procedure? I think of my riding, and that would only hit one in five newspapers of the entire

riding. I have four weeklies and one daily, so it is hitting one centre in five.

Madam Chairman: It costs in the neighbourhood, I think, of \$13,000 for one day for the dailies. You are looking at \$40,000, the clerk advises, to put it in the weeklies.

Mr. Villeneuve: I have the same problem. The two dailies that come to my riding are the Cornwall Standard-Freeholder, which is outside the riding, and the Ottawa Citizen, which is also outside the riding. I have a dozen weeklies, but when you start putting the thing into the weeklies—

Madam Chairman: It gets incredibly expensive.

Mr. Miclash: The problem is it hits such a small portion of my riding, that is what I am saying. You hit one major centre out of the second-largest riding in Ontario, we are talking about one little corner that is going to see this and the rest of it is going to be totally lost.

Madam Chairman: Then your householder might be particularly important and you may want to expand even on what is in here and make it almost like an ad.

Mr. Miclash: Right, if it is timed to go along with this, but sometimes the householders are not quite—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I would not worry about exactly when you send them out, because there is no deadline for those people to tell us that they wish to come. This is just to make sure we get to them before the school year and the organizational time is effectively over for those groups.

The other thing it is to be accompanied by is the information out to all the broad organizations across the province, plus the letters of invitation to the provincial organizations for hearings in July. I hope, or presume, that a lot of those organizations will then send out a mailing to their own membership.

I have a feeling that exposure, plus the possibility of doing a householder any time during the summer, would make sure that most of your riding is picked up; but I recognize the difficulty.

Mr. Miclash: Yes. I find that with a lot of advertisements we seem to concentrate on the major urban centres through dailies. We seem to forget—but I recognize the cost is expensive.

Madam Chairman: I think, as the clerk mentioned, there are 49 communities that are serviced by the dailies.

Clerk of the Committee: There are 49 dailies.

Madam Chairman: There are 49 dailies. It is difficult, but I think with the cost involved we may not have much choice.

Let us go back to Mrs. Cunningham's suggestion. Late May?

Mrs. Cunningham: I think so. It may be off a month for volunteer organizations.

Madam Chairman: That will give them the month of June to prepare any briefs.

OK, late May it is.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The complaint will be that they all forgot by September.

Mrs. Cunningham: Of course, but what do you do?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That is true.

Mrs. Cunningham: They complained the other way last time.

Madam Chairman: Going back to the sub-committee's report: "Research should address the following when preparing material for the committee"—Bob's ears are all perked up—"What are the key lines of debate within educational philosophy and theory on the goals of education in relation to social equality?" We did it in the research even if we do not get it in the main part, Richard.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I thought that was what we were talking about, but never mind.

Madam Chairman: "What has been the impact of the various general approaches to education and key educational reforms on social equality?"

"Impact of particular features of the educational system: streaming, promotion, semestering, Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions"—to clarify OSIS—and the "agenda of recent first ministers' and education ministers' conferences."

There are two other items: "Ministry studies and task forces on specific relevant issues within Ontario, e.g., on streaming and technical education;" and finally, "Ministry studies and task forces under way in other provinces."

"Research should request data from Statistics Canada based on 1986 census."

Bob, if you want briefly to go into this, perhaps Richard could supplement your comments.

Dr. Gardner: There are sort of three parts to the research plan that has been outlined. The first is the overall survey of both the Canadian and international research literature, and that goes down to the last line of page 2. I think we would want some clarification on what goals of the

educational system we are looking at. Do we emphasize, as is laid out here, social equality or do we look a little more broadly? I will be listening to the subsequent discussion and will take your direction on that.

The second thing, with regard to the agenda of the conferences in the next couple of lines, is something on which we will simply amass that information for the September hearings. On the first part, the survey of international literature, we see having that to members before the July hearings. That is part of your context setting for the first round, so to speak. Then we will have some background information on basically what the other provinces have been doing for September.

Finally, the last thing, on the Statistics Canada or the latest census research, I have a memo here, which perhaps I can pass out in just a moment, on the various possibilities of what we might ask from them and what it would cost the committee. This rose out of a suggestion by Mr. Johnston in the steering committee, which he can elaborate on, that we may wish to get the latest census data from 1986, which has not yet been published. It will not be for some time, but we can get a special run. Perhaps I should hand this out so that members have it in front of them.

The idea of this was to get the latest available information on current educational levels and a relation between educational attainment and broader social and economic status in the province. Again, the census data are the most comprehensive social and economic information available. I talked to the Statistics Canada people on what our possibilities would be and what it would cost, and this ties into your budget deliberations.

On your second page, there are a couple of options that the committee could consider: basically, how much data you want to get from the census. The first sort of basic model, I suppose, would cross-classify socioeconomic status. That would be measured by occupation. There is a particular occupational scale which sociologists tend to use, the Pineo-Porter scale, so we cross-classify occupation to educational attainment, age and gender.

I have put in here the qualification that we are not talking about a nice, simple, single sheet. That table would likely be 17 pages long and would be fairly dense to read, but it has certainly a lot of useful information. If that is what the committee wanted, it would cost about \$1,600. These estimates from Statistics Canada are fairly rough and ready. We would have to sit down with

them in detail, but it gives a pretty good indication.

If the committee wished also to have information on the educational differences between Franco-Ontarians and Anglo-Ontarians, the best single way of doing that would be to use mother tongue. If we were to do that—in other words, to add mother tongue to those first classifications of occupation, education, age and gender—then that second table would cost \$1,700 in a simple version; that is, if we just broke it down into English, French and other. If we wanted also to look at people whose mother tongues might be both English and French, English and something else or French and something else, that adds to the statistical complication and doubles the price. If we want that more complicated version, we are talking about \$3,400.

1650

The third option is the basic package of occupation, education, age and gender, plus region. The committee may see that as significant, given the concerns over regional differentiations and so on. A table along those lines would cost \$1,800.

A final table, if the committee wished to look at rural-urban differences, would cost a further \$2,600.

To sum up, on page 3, we are looking at a low of \$1,600 for the basic table to a high of \$9,400 if the committee wanted all of these tables in all their complexity. The question is cost. That is for you to decide.

There is a sense in which there is a tension between getting comprehensive information and perhaps getting too much. It just becomes too detailed and too complicated to be really useful. Again, we can interpret that for you as best we can, but that might be worth considering. I can certainly speak to that if anybody has questions along those lines.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: When I suggested this might be a useful thing to do, I was thinking of that basic cross-reference because I thought the goal was to look at the social equality components of education to try to get the most up-to-date information we could. We would be relying on information from the 1981 census if we did not get new information.

Somebody at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education said he thought we could get it fairly quickly, before we have the summer hearings, for instance, and at a fairly good price. In fact, I have had an initial Pineo-Porter style correlation and it is cheaper than he thought it would be, as I recall.

When I raised it at the steering committee to say that I wondered if people were interested in getting this base information, that is what is the status now in terms of one's social class and education and any other variables that people thought were useful, there was an interest in doing it. That is when the other notions around language and perhaps regional differentiation were raised. Then Bob went off to try to find what the cost of this would be and come back with the packages.

Madam Chairman: Before you proceed, Dr. Gardner has a comment as to timing which may influence our decision.

Dr. Gardner: Sorry, Mr. Johnston. The first talks Professor Livingstone had with Statistics Canada were a bit optimistic on the time frame. The people I have been talking to say they are quite backed up in Ottawa and that they would need about 12 to 14 weeks from the time we finalize our requirements with them and sign a contract. That would make it quite tight for the July hearings. It would certainly make it fairly sure—they apparently guarantee their contracts so it would absolutely sure for the September hearings.

Mr. Villeneuve: Bill 77 is approving a new method of enumeration here and that should be all completed by the end of May. Maybe we will have all this from the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Eakins).

Mr. R. F. Johnston: God knows. My sense is that we do not want to get too complicated in what we ask. If our goal was, as I thought it had been, to look at that one major role for education which has been presumed, that is that it does play a social equalizing role in our society and maybe has had unrealistic expectations placed on it in terms of what it can do in isolation, then we should at least get some base information that was as up to date as possible on it.

I would be interested to hear other committee members' feelings about what they would like added into that basic socioeconomic breakdown. In many ways, the items you have laid out are useful correlations to have. The old stats all show that the French community advances less far in terms of going to post-secondary education, 45 per cent of the anglo rate. Those are old stats. I do not know what it is now, almost a decade after that.

On the regional breakdown in the past, I think there has been some indication that people from northern Ontario were less likely to get higher education than were people in the Metropolitan area, and certainly the rural-urban mix was the

case; but if you look at the latest information from the Council of Ontario Universities, it is saying that there is starting to be a major change in the attendance at universities of rural students. That is just from admissions statistics, but this on a demographic analysis through Statistics Canada and we would be the only people who had developed this base information. In fact, nobody at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education has asked for this kind of thing, or any other education theorist that I know of.

I think it would be a good working base if our goal is to deal with that particular item. If it is to deal with all of the goals in education and the philosophy of education, then it may be something which is an expenditure that we do not want to make, we may want to wait until the professionals out there have actually accumulated it.

Madam Chairman: I do not know, so this is just from a personal opinion, but I see this as being very valuable even for the September hearings. I certainly do not have any objection to going ahead with this. I guess the one consideration would be the time frame. It looks as if it is possible we might not even have it for the July hearings, if it is 12 to 14 weeks from the time the contract is negotiated.

Mrs. O'Neill: What have we put into the budget for this exercise?

Mr. Chairman: We have \$4,500.

Mrs. O'Neill: Are these costs a table, or are they a copy of the tables for each of us? I have no idea how these things come. How do they come?

Dr. Gardner: It can come in various forms, but basically they would present us with tables on paper. We could also get the computer tapes from them. We can get them on diskettes as well. I think getting them on tapes does not add that much. It might be useful for us to have such tapes in case we want them analysed by people at OISE or by other professionals. If that does not cost too much extra, that may be worth it. If the committee wishes, the steering committee can sort out how much those extra costs would be.

We would get them on paper and then every committee member would get them. That run is the committee's property, so everybody can get them and the committee can do with them what it wishes.

Mrs. O'Neill: Are you suggesting these are custom research requests?

Dr. Gardner: Yes.

Mrs. O'Neill: If we stick to the budget you have presented as a steering committee, we have

to cut it in half. You just said \$9,400, and you have \$4,500.

Madam Chairman: We do have some flexibility. For instance, the multiple response under the French-English option is \$1,700 and \$3,400. I agree, I do not see us choosing all of these categories, but we could also choose the basic in a couple of them.

Mrs. O'Neill: I feel rather strongly about the French-English, simply because I think we took a historic step in our legislation yesterday or the day before with the French-language school board. We are now three years into Bill 75, and it is going finally to reach its full potential when the elections take place in November.

It just seems to me we are at a turning point here in French education in this province. If we did not get some reading of where we are starting from, so to speak, I think we are missing something.

I am sure the Franco-Ontarians are going to be very heavily represented in their presentations to us, simply because of their new governance rights which have brought the community together and have made them much more excited than they formerly were when they were strictly advisory committees.

So for our own—what should I say?—perspective in being able to put things into some kind of context, data like this on Franco-Ontarians would be certainly helpful, since I think Mr. Villeneuve is the only Franco-Ontarian who sits on the committee.

Mrs. Cunningham: I certainly think we need some base information. My question is more technical. Normally, we would not have to go for this kind of information. This is something that is put together under education tables, marital status, whatever, sometimes by region, other times by cities, municipalities, etc., broken down. Normally, when would we get this? Is this something that is not on their priority list until 1991, or is it something that is coming in December?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It has all changed now. That is the trouble, is it not?

Mrs. Cunningham: That is what I need to know.

Madam Chairman: They are working with new data.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The way Statscan is dealing with this now is different to what it used to be. Maybe Bob has more to say.

Dr. Gardner: There are sort of two levels of answer to that. One is that the Statistics Canada occupational data are not seen to be a satisfactory measure of socioeconomic status by most sociologists. What they would be doing for us is a special run whereby they rejig their basic categories into this Pineo-Porter scale, which is the scale of 16 basic occupational groups which seem to reflect the social structure or the class structure more realistically. If we were to rely on their occupational data, in the view of sociologists it would not give us as good a fit to then measure that against the other things. That is one part.

The second part—a more specific answer to your question: according to people I was speaking to, they are going to be releasing some of their occupational data this year probably, but it would not be in precisely this form that would relate all the things we want to look at. It does tend to get broken down by province in their basic packages. We very likely would see option one in their occupational terms, not in the ones that we may wish to follow, but we would not likely see it broken down into the other options we might like to look at. There are problems.

Madam Chairman: When you consider we are going to paying \$4,500 for coffee, it seems a moot point to question \$4,500 for research.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: How did we get that bargain? I have never seen a—

Mrs. Cunningham: I guess I just have not had time to look at what that occupational category, is and as long as it is answering the questions we want—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Pineo-Porter is the recognized methodology in Canada, at least at this stage, in terms of the most sophisticated means of determining economic level. Most of the federal statistics—and I cannot remember what the categories are, but I think they have about eight categories, about half the number of these—are less sophisticated, frankly, than this one is. This would be the more accurate way of actually getting an idea of the income level of groups than the straight Statscan information. I think the basic run is crucial. Then the question is, do we want to add in French-English and the regional and the rural; or do we think we can deal with, say the regional in part just by dealing with the rural-urban split?

Madam Chairman: I would point out that the reason the budget is passed last is that we can still amend it at this stage. Should the committee

decide all four categories are absolutely vital, we can amend the budget accordingly.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: What are your feelings on this, Noble?

Mr. Villeneuve: I certainly would like to see the franco-anglo split. I firmly believe there is a great disparity, particularly in the region that my riding is situated in as opposed to many other regions. I think it would be a real focus point to northerners as well because there are definitely discrepancies and we know they are there. This would emphasize them. You know how that has gone through the chain as to the type of education that those students from those areas and from those particular backgrounds get.

Madam Chairman: So far we have had members commenting on the first three options. Would anybody like to comment on whether there is a fourth option, other than of the other three?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I guess what I would suggest is, so that we are not seen to be too profligate in all this, is that we deal with option two, but we would take the simple classification rather than the more complicated bilingual family classification. It may be—it has been too long since I have really looked at the Pineo-Porter approach on this—but it may be that in the occupational breakdowns that we get on that there are some regionalized notions, or it might give us at least the rural-urban split. What do you think, Dr. Gardner?

Dr. Gardner: I do not think they would give you much regional data at all. Now if it is a question of which would be most useful between the regional or the rural-urban, it may be that what they have to do to get a regional breakdown is basically to start at the census districts and then work up, however we define them. I would think that we would want to define them in the same way the ministry does—regionally—just to be consistent, but it could be that we would also want to see the actual breakdown by census districts, where we could make fairly good guesses as to rural versus urban areas. We might not lose too much data by not bothering about option 4, which still may have the rural-urban and it could be in terms of the admissions data from universities. Who knows, there may be other ways of getting at that.

Mr. Villeneuve: Certainly there was an extreme situation that happened back in the early 1980s, when we know that most of Ontario was going through some very difficult economic times, but when you included metropolitan

Ottawa in eastern Ontario it tempered it tremendously. If you eliminated that metropolitan area you really got the picture of what things were like. They were tough. Cornwall and towns like Alexandria were really in trouble; but once you included metropolitan Ottawa in that it tempered it tremendously, because they never felt the recession at all. Is that not right?

Madam Chairman: If we chose the first three and the simple one of option two, that would be \$5,100. We could obviously upgrade that slightly to account for any overlap.

Mr. Reycraft: I am sorry. I was distracted for a moment. What were you proposing?

Madam Chairman: To do option one, the basic of option two and option three. Is there a consensus on that?

Mr. Reycraft: If we are going to get that much information I would like to see the rural-urban split as well. I am not surprised to hear what the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry (Mr. Villeneuve) was saying.

Mr. Villeneuve: It disturbs me a little in that it might present a distorted picture. We have many nonagricultural people living in rural Ontario. I do not know what that would do to those statistics.

Madam Chairman: Mrs. Cunningham, do you want to comment?

Mrs. Cunningham: I am confused. I do not know whether we should be leaving it up to someone else. I am interested in the urban-rural. In anything I have ever done I have been able to put that stuff into the regional data myself, but that may not be the case because I am not sure how this '86 stuff is following. Normally, by the track, you can put it into urban-rural, and then you take that and put into region. I see it all working the other way around; but I am interested in the urban-rural stuff.

Madam Chairman: Would it be a suggestion that Dr. Gardner look at those two options, get further information and we could leave the decision up to him? Do you feel comfortable with that?

Dr. Gardner: I can speak a bit to that now on the rural-urban option. What happens with that, and it does speak to Mr. Villeneuve's question, is that there are various categories. One is rural and one is rural nonfarm.

Mr. Villeneuve: Is that broken down?

Dr. Gardner: Yes. It is designed to basically catch those areas that have become subdivisions of cities, but are still in formal terms in rural

areas. There are ways of catching the agricultural-nonagricultural. It is not exact, but it is possible. What we would get is a kind of continuum from above 500,000 population in metropolitan areas through a couple of sizes of cities to towns; and then two categories of rural—farm and nonfarm.

Again, we are asking for a special run. I do not think it would be easy to go from census track up to that, because sometimes there is some overlap. I think we are better to separate them if the committee wishes the information on that. It makes it an awful lot clearer from just the presentation point of view.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I have some concern about us not dealing with it today and getting the budget determined and passed for this so that we can get this run going no matter when it comes in. I think the decision essentially comes down to what the member for Middlesex (Mr. Reycraft) was saying—if we have gone far enough to get the first three splits and we want to do this well, maybe we should go for the package of all four options. It would be hard for anybody to think this would not be money well spent in terms of the importance of that kind of information to what we are talking about, as well as to other people out there who, I am sure, could make use of this afterwards. I am not sure we could sell it to them, but we could—

Madam Chairman: We could try.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: We could try that, in the entrepreneurial spirit of the times.

1710

Madam Chairman: That would come to \$7,700, if we did all four options but the basic French-English option. Perhaps we would add an extra 4,000 to the \$4,500 you have already. Would that allow enough overlap in case the actual figures are a bit higher?

Clerk of the Committee: I think if we put in the \$7,700 that would be a little cushion.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I will move that at the appropriate time. I do not have to do it right now, I guess, that we go to the \$7,700.

Madam Chairman: I think the clerk has probably built in enough cushions at \$7,700.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: As long as it is a barebones budget; I think it is important to say, before we go to the board, that this is a barebones budget, no cushions.

Madam Chairman: Of course it is. The only cushion was that we did not know whether we were going to be drinking one or two cups of

coffee each, so she had to allow for our heavy drinking habits. Other than that, it is a barebones budget.

Do you want to take a look at your budget since we have been discussing that?

Clerk of the Committee: If you do not want to deal with that letter right now, could we pass the rest of the report as we have amended it, other than the letter?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I would like to go back and have one more try at the letter to see if we can do something on it.

Madam Chairman: The member for Ottawa-Rideau had a suggestion.

Mrs. O'Neill: Yes, I do, if I can find it now. The way I would like to suggest we describe OSIS, Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions—I have been on the other end of this stuff coming out of Queen's Park for so long that I think we could suggest that we describe it as "program and diploma requirements as described in OSIS," and just put OSIS. That is really what we want them to talk about, the program and diploma requirements as they exist today. That is why OSIS is here. That is what it actually says on the front of the document; so we would just say, "The process relating to streaming grade promotions, semestering and program and diploma requirements as described in OSIS."

Now my other suggestion: Where is it?

Madam Chairman: That was the easy one. What about the other?

Mrs. O'Neill: I have it; in the philosophy, "will conduct a review of education philosophy in Ontario and the fundamental goals of the system as they are directly related to the full development of each student," or something like that, "and the very important role of parents or guardians in that development." That is my interpretation. I thought we wanted to bring the role of parents in, and that includes the broader community. That may be wrong and I would not mind dropping that if you just want to say "as they are directly related to the full development of each student."

It certainly gives rise to the separate school system's philosophy and the French-language situation, and certainly the public school system's philosophy, as well as any other multicultural group.

That is all I wanted to say. I felt perhaps we could simplify it to say "as they are directly related to the full development of each student." Perhaps somebody wants to change it. That is a simple suggestion.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I do not have any trouble with the addition of the notion of a student-centred kind of approach to this, but I still do not think it meets my concern about trying to have some linkage between what we talked about in July and what we are going to deal with in September in terms of the social equality questions which we are now going to be running census tracks on.

Mrs. O'Neill: Could you just add to what I have suggested?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I would not mind if there were an addendum of some wording to that, if it is not offensive to Mr. Jackson's approach on this that we not seem to be limiting. Maybe we can do it in language that does not limit it to the issue of social equality but somehow highlights that so that they know; even if we are just saying that we will be dealing with issues around the role of social equality in September. I do not know how we would do that, but keeping that in mind, or something like that, would be helpful.

Madam Chairman: Could we use the words in brackets, "for example, education as a social equalizer, education as it fully relates to each student, access to education," that type of thing; almost a listing of examples of their approach?

Mrs. O'Neill: Mr. Johnston, I am sure, will understand why, like Mr. Jackson, although I would never speak for him, I have a little trouble with the phrase "social equality."

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am willing to have another term for that.

Mrs. O'Neill: Can we state "adjustment to a fulfilling adult world, including work" or "work experiences;" something like that? I think what Mr. Jackson is trying to get away from, and I am too, is education as only a preparation for work. I totally agree with him on that.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Me too. My concern was that in philosophical terms many people have seen education as a major tool, and in some cases as the major tool, for providing upward mobility for the people in our society who happen to be born into a socioeconomic status that is lower than the average, so that we would not be seen to be as rigid a society as others are in terms of their class stratification.

When you look at the long-term statistics on this, there is a real question as to whether the education system has succeeded in being that instrument. I think there are a lot of reasons why the expectations were so high from it, and perhaps the way we have implemented education was not really focused on doing that anyway.

I was not concerned so much with the notion of the specific job preparation side of things at all, but more with whether it has really played that larger social role in terms of allowing people to have more upward mobility in our society than they have in other societies. That is where issues like streaming come in. If you look at the old statistics on streaming back to the end of the 1970s or the 1980s, you see that kids from poor families tend to get streamed low in much higher percentages than kids from higher socioeconomic brackets. That, therefore, rigidifies the stratification of society rather than allowing for mobility.

What I was hoping we could enter into, in terms of a discussion of streaming and other organizational aspects of credits and that kind of thing, is seeing whether the goals we had established around upward social mobility, that kind of thing, or the educational system as that kind of a tool, were actually working; whether the expectations were wrong, whether the kinds of things we are doing in this business in fact run counter to that or whether it is because there are not other supports out there in terms of the social assistance system and other things that are really holding people down.

My goal was to get that kind of a social justice side to it. I am not quibbling about the language. Anybody who can up with the right words for people would be fine with me. But it is to do with the whole question of upward mobility and the liberation of the individual to overcome the class groupings that are out there in society. That was part of what the child-centred philosophy would allow, the liberation of that child past those kinds of bonds that hold people in their particular class groups.

Mrs. O'Neill: You do not like "full development of each student." You do not think that is sufficient?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: No, I do not, because in some people's minds the full development of kids from a working-class family is that they should be streamed into the lower area. That is as full a development as you can get. It is like the old definitions of special education when we used to fight those battles on that. The basic understanding was that if somebody could get a grade 10 education and get out into the work-force, that was all we really had to do for them in special education. There were prejudices built into it, let me put it that way.

Mrs. O'Neill: I will withdraw my suggestion then and hope someone can come up with something else.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I do not have any problem with the wording you have added, if there is something else you can do to enhance it.

Mrs. O'Neill: OK, then we will keep it. If we agree for the second time in one afternoon, we better write it down.

Madam Chairman: I am sorry I missed that momentous occasion. Was it a major point of agreement?

Mrs. O'Neill: He is agreeing with what I have said but he wants to add something else.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I just want to try to add something else which makes it clear that there is a social mobility factor involved in this as well.

1720

Madam Chairman: Dr. Gardner has suggested a compromise which I think takes in Mr. Johnston and Mrs. O'Neill.

Dr. Gardner: We are searching for one.

Madam Chairman: Oh, I am sorry. I thought of this. He told me I am supposed to take credit for this. I am not sure you will like it. I will wait to take credit for it. I am not sure it fits Mr. Jackson's anyway: "Goals as they relate to the equal life chances and full development of each student." Mr. Jackson specifically mentioned access to the educational system.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: In a sense, though, that does probably mean it.

Madam Chairman: This may be a naïve question or maybe a cynical one, but does it really matter what we say? I have a feeling these groups are going to come and present what they feel like presenting, which is natural and reasonable. Are we not just setting arbitrary guidelines which they will not really want to follow anyway?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: There is always some of that. It is inevitable that people come in with their own agenda and use the platform for their purposes, and more power to them for doing that. But I think we do have to give them some idea of what our expectations are so that they can respond to them.

I would be happy with that approach to it. I do not think it is so limiting that Mr. Jackson would oppose it, perhaps if there is consensus from his colleagues we could pass it, with a caveat that if he has a difficulty with it it comes back to the steering committee to finalize. It is not the kind of thing the whole committee has to deal with. If he is happy with it we do not have to meet any more. If he is not happy with it—

Madam Chairman: Then the penalty is that we do have to meet.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Then we would have to meet as a steering group.

Madam Chairman: That is an incentive for him to agree to it.

Mrs. O'Neill: Would you repeat the exact phrase again?

Madam Chairman: "Goals as they relate to the equal life chances and full development of each student."

Mr. R. F. Johnston: You are leaving in the words "a review of education philosophy" as well, are you not?

Madam Chairman: Yes.

Mrs. O'Neill: I do not like to be sticky but I would like to put the development first and the equal life chances second, because I think you have to have the development before you get into the life chances.

It is important that we direct this, simply because we do not want it to be teacher focused at this particular point. Quality of education should be student focused. I think if we give it that focus, we will get away from, as we seem to want to, funding, professional development of teachers and election of school trustees. Those are just examples. I think we are in agreement that we want to focus it on the students, are we not?

Madam Chairman: That is a good point. The only suggestion I might make is that it reads quite well as it is with "the equal life chances and full development of each student." It highlights "development of each student." That was just a suggestion.

Mrs. O'Neill: OK. Fine.

Madam Chairman: Mrs. Cunningham, did you want to comment? I noticed you had your hand up.

Mrs. Cunningham: No, I think that is great. I definitely agree that you will get everything if you do not focus on the students, and that is what we want to hear.

Mrs. O'Neill: I think that is what we want to hear.

Mrs. Cunningham: Exactly, I hope so.

Madam Chairman: Quickly, before people change their minds. Can we pass this report as discussed and amended? Agreed? That is wonderful. We did achieve consensus.

Now, on a separate motion, can we pass the budget, as amended?

Mr. Villeneuve: The only amendment would be the increase for professional services, would it not?

Madam Chairman: Unless anybody has anything else to add. We would be increasing research to \$7,700 and we would be adjusting the front figure as applicable. That is why I wanted to add \$4,000. Then I could tell you what the front figure was. But you have made it too difficult for me.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Accepted as amended?

Madam Chairman: Agreed? Very good.

There are two other brief items. First, could we have an authorization for the steering committee to deal with any problems that come up in the scope of what we have discussed today? Agreed.

The last item I think should be fairly brief, if we could have it in camera at the request of the clerk. It just refers to the seating and the room arrangements for the committee's meeting.

Mrs. O'Neill: Madam Chairman, will you be giving us, as soon as possible, the results of the discussions with the House leaders regarding the dates?

Madam Chairman: Certainly, as soon as they are available to me, I shall notify each member so that you can make appropriate plans.

Mrs. O'Neill: You do expect to talk to these people soon, do you?

Madam Chairman: We do intend to talk to the whips and the House leaders immediately but we do not know how long it will take. Obviously they have to—

Clerk of the Committee: Normally the final decision on the official approval is done on the last day the House sits, but you will have a pretty

good idea from your own whip, I would think, somewhere—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It really depends.

Mrs. O'Neill: The other thing is that when we send out these invitations and everything, then we have to say "tentatively."

Clerk of the Committee: When they call in I let them know that there may be changes, so no one is surprised if there are any changes. I try very hard to have everybody I speak to know.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Reycraft, did you want to elaborate at all?

Mr. Reycraft: I was going to suggest that we might be able to take some action now that would be helpful. I suggest that the clerk should send a letter to the government House leader, with copies to the other House leaders and whips, indicating in the letter the dates that we are requesting to sit and explaining why we need early approval of those dates: the need to contact deputations, delegations, etc., and to advertise.

I know there have been other committees that have obtained a sort of conditional approval, and ultimately they got what they asked for. That was finally approved. If we can put that on record as soon as possible, then I think there is a good chance we can get that sort of tentative approval from the whips soon.

Madam Chairman: Although we are going in camera, it is not vital. It is just a matter that you might not want to discuss with Hansard. OK, we are now about to move in camera.

The committee continued in camera at 5:27 p.m.

ERRATUM

No.	Page	Column	Line	Should read:
E-1	E-6	2	4	sector, are not being raised.

CONTENTS

Wednesday, April 13, 1988

Organization	E-47
Adjournment	E-66
Erratum	E-66

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Chairman: Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)

Vice-Chairman: Reyecraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)

Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)

Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)

Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)

Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)

Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)

Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)

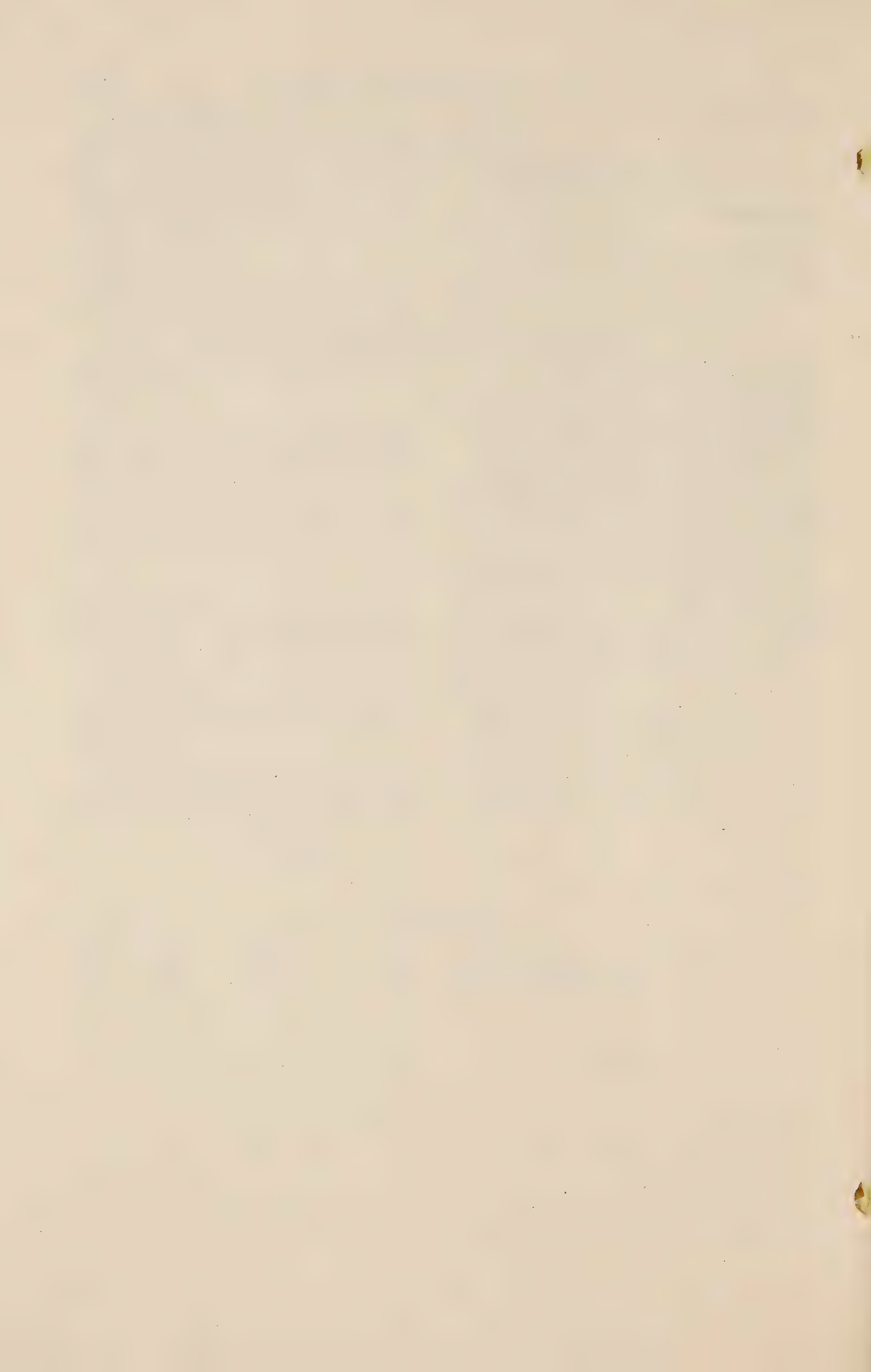
O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)

Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)

Clerk: Mellor, Lynn

Staff:

Gardner, Dr. Robert J. L., Assistant Chief, Legislative Research Service





No. E-4

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Select Committee on Education

Philosophy and Goals of Education

First Session, 34th Parliament

Monday, July 18, 1988

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario
Editor of Debates: Peter Brannan

CONTENTS

Contents of the proceedings reported in this issue of Hansard appears at the back, together with a list of the members of the committee and other members and witnesses taking part.

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues can be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at (416) 965-2159.

Hansard subscription price is \$16.00 per session, from: Sessional Subscription Service, Information Services Branch, Ministry of Government Services, 5th Floor, 880 Bay Street, Toronto, M7A 1N8. Phone (416) 965-2238.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Monday, July 18, 1988

The committee met at 1:06 p.m. in room 151.

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS OF EDUCATION

Madam Chairman: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Since I recognize a quorum, I think we will get started. This afternoon our July hearings on the philosophy and goals of education in Ontario are going to start off with a presentation by the Ministry of Education. At this stage, I would like to introduce Duncan Green, assistant deputy minister, who will be introducing the panel today.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Mr. Green: Thank you, Madam Chairman and members of the committee. With me, on my right, are Mark Larratt-Smith, who is assistant deputy minister, corporate policy and planning division of the ministry; on my immediate left, Mariette Carrier-Fraser, who is the assistant deputy minister for French-language education; and on my far left—appropriately on my far left—is Frank Clifford, executive director, who has been responsible for the implementation of Bill 30, the extension of funding to the separate school system.

I may say one or two words about our process this afternoon, if that is appropriate. First, I think all of us are making our presentations in English. Madam Carrier-Fraser has also concurred in the opinion that it might be more convenient for the committee and for the audience this afternoon, although that, of course, does not inhibit questions in French from any of the members of the committee. That is our understanding, at any rate.

I would emphasize that virtually all of the material that is generated within the Ministry of Education is generated in both languages, however, so that any books, pamphlets, course guidelines and such that we have reference to are, by and large, available in both languages.

Second, notwithstanding the terms of reference of the committee, which is to inquire into the role of formal education and the successful transition of young students to adulthood in Ontario, in the event that this led anyone to think that this was going to deal exclusively with secondary schools, it is not. We would regard the

total formal educational system as a part of the subject of the committee's examination, although that transitional point is perhaps more acute for your purposes than some of the other aspects of the system.

Third, it is our intention this afternoon to provide a context for the committee's deliberations, perhaps somewhat presumptuously, but we would like to make some reference to the international situation, some reference to the historical situation and references to the current status of the particular areas that we propose to deal with.

Finally, despite appearances—and I have a pile of stuff before me—we did not come armed with a blizzard of paper. We are prepared, of course, to provide whatever the committee should wish by way of statistics, background material or documents—most of which we have, I suspect—that you asked for; but we have not brought them today and we are not interested in facing you with a formidable collection of material that presumably you should go through instantly. Our purpose is to try to set a broad context for the activities of the committee.

Madam Chairman: Perhaps this might be an opportune time to mention for the members that we do have a folder of background information, including the reports that the committee had requested and also background information from legislative research. In spite of the fact that Mr. Green has been kind enough to spare us a blizzard of paper we do have some before us, in addition to a number of exhibits that have already been submitted to the committee.

Mr. Green, I suppose you would allow questions from the members at the end of each section, rather than as we go, or how would you like it?

Mr. Green: Actually, I think it might serve the committee more if we each went through our piece and then did it later, because there is so much interrelationship that we will be treading on one another's toes shortly.

What we have planned is roughly as follows, if this suits your need: First, I am to open with the context and the history, basically, of the aims of education, and the programs as they currently stand in the province.

Mr. Larratt-Smith is to follow me, dealing particularly with the role of the ministry, the governing structures and the financing of education. Madam Carrier-Fraser is to follow with the history and development of the French-language schools and Mr. Clifford is to follow with the history and development of the Roman Catholic school system. Both of them will deal with the current status.

In the time lines we have tentatively allowed ourselves, they gave me 45 minutes but I am going to try to hold to half an hour, and the others have 10 minutes each. We felt that if you got that total overview, it might be more helpful. Then we will devote the rest of the afternoon to questions, or certainly return to the committee if you wish. Is that agreeable?

Madam Chairman: That sounds fine. If that is acceptable to the members, we will hold questions until the end of the full presentation.

Mr. Green: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Would you like to continue?

Mr. Green: Thank you, Madam Chairman. I suppose the first thing I should note is that you are not alone in this activity of examining educational systems, and the reasons for that are probably common to more parts of the world than one would anticipate. Certainly the last half, particularly the last quarter, of this century, is historically unique with respect to the scope, pace and interrelatedness of the change and growth that is taking place globally.

There is a flood of new knowledge driving world economies, resulting in major changes in the means by which societies produce and distribute their wealth in relation to an integrated system of worldwide production. International competition for markets reduces the certainty of the knowledge requirements that we have traditionally leaned on.

Technological innovations have accelerated the rate of change, but often without regard to social, economic or political consequences. Unintended changes in the environment are pushing the earth's system past the critical level of stability in some arenas. In this new information era, people and their development are almost more important than capital and its development.

Adaptability, creativity and individual effort are replacing narrowly defined intelligences as desired characteristics for educated persons. In response to that perplexity, education is under scrutiny in almost every country in the world—I will take some significant examples—and in most

of those countries major education reform is under way.

The unique character of each country's current education system, its political, social and economic systems and its cultural mix, have led to different agendas. In the United States, reform has taken the direction of school improvement efforts, emphasis on state-by-state comparisons and movement towards a centralized curriculum.

I do not know whether any of the members of the committee had the opportunity to hear Pacific Encounters yesterday on the CBC. They have been doing a series on the Pacific Rim nations and yesterday's was on education. There was quite an interesting long session on Japan. There, a national evaluation system and a teacher-directed learning process exist, and emphasis on individuality, the cultivation of creativity and thinking ability, and the power of expression are the key concepts for reform.

Major reform efforts in England are aimed at centralization of the curriculum and the empowerment of schools for educational reform, as distinct from authorities for example, whereas France is concerned with the decentralization of its delivery system.

In West Germany, a strong vocational education system exists. The nature of skills training programs is being reviewed in relation to technological changes and training and retraining of the workforce, and special emphasis on the needs of imported workers is receiving attention.

In Ontario, we have been engaged in the last few years in a good deal of activity around the governance of education, and I suppose the two significant pieces of legislation, which we will be speaking of later, Bill 30 and Bill 75, relate specifically to that. Consideration of reform in our system should take into account both individual growth and societal prosperity.

In terms of history, I do not propose to start with Socrates. I do not even propose to go back as far as Pestalozzi. I do not even propose to go to back as far as Dewey. I thought I would start with the Hope commission report of 1950. The reason I got this job, by the way, was the colour and sparsity of my hair. It is to be presumed that I have lived through most of what I am talking about. In this particular case, it is true. I began teaching in 1950 and the Hope commission at that time was a publication that culminated five years of study in the school system. You can see how formidable it was. It is the report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario in 1950 chaired by Justice Hope.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: How many studies have there been since?

Mr. Green: Since that time, there have been several. I will refer to a couple.

I did have some overheads in our traditional educational style. I have been deprived of those, but I hope the members have copies of them. If you have them before you, would you turn your attention to the first one, which outlines the aims of education enunciated by the Hope commission in 1950. They were:

(a) To develop capacity to apprehend and practise basic virtues; (b) to develop the power to think clearly, independently and courageously; (c) to develop talent to understand the views of others and to express one's own views effectively; (d) to develop competence for a suitable occupation; (e) to develop good health; (f) to develop aptitudes for recreation; (g) to develop characteristics for happy family relations; (h) to develop good citizenship; and (i) to develop the concept that education is a continuing process beyond the school.

Anyone to whom I have shown these in recent days has said he had no difficulty in subscribing to that set of aims—none at all. I would commend the first chapter of the report to the committee's attention, if you get the opportunity.

In the first instance, it has one of the best outlines I have read of one of the basic tensions that exist in the educational system, and it is couched, moreover, in a quaintness of setting that will surprise you. That is only 40 years ago—not quite 40 years; I guess it would be 40 when you consider the writing time. But the references, very prominent in the opening chapter, to a society that has radically changed in its composition and its makeup, the traditional and Christian orientation, the very specific references throughout the report to the Orange Order, for example, and the very specific references to minority populations ring on the ears very differently today, notwithstanding the fact that we can all subscribe to those aims.

I found it interesting—the next one is from *Living and Learning*—to go to approximately 20 years later. They have one paragraph commenting on the aims of education in the Hope commission report. It reads as follows:

1420

"The committee," that is, the Hall-Dennis committee, "is in general agreement with these aims and with the emphasis on development. It believes, however, that the important first aim (a) needs to be made definite by designating just what virtues the school, and more precisely the

public school, can and should develop;" a question that I am sure arose in the minds of the members of the committee as they read the first aim.

They say that (f) should be more definitive. You will notice (f) was to develop aptitudes for recreation. On the other hand, (d) should be less definite. You will note (d) was to develop competence for a suitable occupation. They say the above criticism is not intended as a reflection on an excellent statement of aims; it is meant only to indicate some of the differences in thinking 15 or 20 years later.

If I could remark on those just briefly, I find that the comment on (d) is the most significant.

This study, the Hope commission, began in 1945, immediately post-war. "Now that we have won, what bold future are we going to build?" That bold future was rather far-sighted, as a matter of fact. The Hope commission recommended the system of junior colleges, the termination of secondary school at grade 12 and a number of reforms that later appeared in slightly different form, but it certainly was well ahead of being able to be absorbed by the Ontario population at that time.

Its references to costing, you will find comforting. The numbers seem so small that you wonder why they did not do it, taken in today's context, forgetting inflation. They balked on one recommendation, I remember, that would have cost the unheard of sum of \$15 million.

However, at that time they lent themselves certainly to preparation for a suitable occupation. Coming out of that war, we were very much entering a strong manufacturing era. They looked to the schools preparing students for jobs in the workplace, as (d) indicates. By 1968, however, society had loosened up to the extent that those jobs were a little more difficult to identify. As a result, the committee that produced the *Living and Learning* report of 1968 indicated that specific job preparation should not so much be a factor in the schools' programs nor in the development of individuals. They were content more to let that dollar flow.

I have chosen those two reports because they identify one of the key tensions that exists in the educational system: and that is, does it exist to develop to its fullest the potential of each individual or does it exist to serve the needs of the society in which that individual finds himself or herself?

Probably ourselves, certainly in the *Living and Learning* days, and China even indeed today, would serve as extremes in this proposition.

Where there is a societal planning activity on, students are prepared for specific occupations to fit into specific jobs and are assigned their roles at the conclusion of their educational process, regardless of where that may occur.

In our society, we have resisted that rather strongly. We have used incentives sometimes to encourage people to undertake particular courses of action rather than others, but we are rather reluctant, for example, to establish quotas for entrance into certain programs because we feel that the opening should be there for individuals to undertake. That tension reflects itself constantly in the system.

On occasion, we are asked to provide for meeting national agendas on a large scale. Bilingualism would be an example. The ability to manage in both languages may not be an individual desire particularly nor an individual's preference—possibly not even an individual's potential—but we see it as an agenda that is so important to us and we see the educational system as the delivery process for that.

The most recent example would be the introduction of compulsory instruction in acquired immune deficiency syndrome education for grades 7 to 10, where we meet a social crisis using the education system to do so.

Throughout the time that I have been at it, at any rate, and with the reading that I have done earlier than that, that tension has always existed. Are we serving an individual, in which case education may be looked on more as a process, or are we serving the needs of the society, in which case we will anticipate a specific kind of product from it? It is my view, but you may want to decide this later, that given recent reports—for example, the dropout study by Mr. Radwanski and the report of the Premier's Council on education technology—we are moving a little bit more with that pendulum towards ensuring the needs of society being met. We are trying to do that without sacrificing individual objectives.

If you would turn to The Goals of Education today, they are in many respects not too different from the ones enunciated either in the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario report or in Living and Learning. If there is an influence in them, it is probably more strongly an inheritance from Living and Learning and the Hall-Dennis committee than it would be from the Hope commission, because these goals emphasize the individual's needs being served by the education system. Indeed, the preamble to them should really read "goals of education for Ontario are to

help each student." Then it goes on to use the operative verbs.

They are: to "develop a responsiveness to the dynamic processes of learning; develop resourcefulness, adaptability and creativity in learning and living; acquire the basic knowledge and skills needed to comprehend and express ideas through words, numbers and other symbols; develop physical fitness and good health; gain satisfaction from participating and from sharing the participation of others in various forms of artistic expression; develop a feeling of self-worth; develop an understanding of the role of the individual within the family and the role of the family within society; acquire skills that contribute to self-reliance in solving practical problems in everyday life; develop a sense of personal responsibility in society at the local, national and international levels; develop esteem for the customs, cultures and beliefs of a wide variety of societal groups; acquire skills and attitudes that will lead to satisfaction and productivity in the world of work; develop respect for the environment and a commitment to the wise use of resources, and develop values related to personal, ethical or religious beliefs and to the common welfare of society."

Like most goals, those are ambitiously stated and idealistically put. On the other hand, if you do not aim for the clouds, you do not get there. The means of implementing them are difficult and complex.

You will notice they are a mixture of specific skills that are not difficult to identify. For example, we would probably be able to reach some fairly quick agreement on the core centre of the basic knowledge and skills—we could reach agreement on the skills; I am not sure about the knowledge—needed to comprehend and express ideas through words, numbers and other symbols. We could probably rather quickly come to that.

In terms of developing a responsiveness to the dynamic processes of learning, our measuring instruments are not quite so acute. We know that it should have much to do with motivation. We know that if we were successful in that there would likely be fewer students dropping out of secondary schools, unless indeed we have done such a good job that they were able to learn equally well outside of the school setting as inside, a situation which, for many of them, is an achievable goal, and they have achieved it.

So those goals are not too different. They emphasize the individuality or the way in which the system addressed the individual. The first

thing I would like to stress with the committee is that we do live constantly with this tension about the purposes of the system.

It has been, I suppose, extended in our minds with the passage of legislation such as Bill 82, which imposes upon boards the responsibility of providing for every individual within their jurisdiction an appropriate program for that individual's needs. That frequently is difficult to equate with the societal objectives of generating, perhaps, a specific target group of employable individuals at a point in time.

1430

It is exacerbated as well by our recognition of the population change that has taken place in the province over the last 40 years, with a significant number of our population now coming from homes in which neither English nor French is the prime language of communication. Our best information indicates that process is apt to continue at an accelerated rate through the 1990s and not slow down, so that given the diversity of populations and the diversity of human potentiality, the tensions between the societal needs and the individual needs are probably going to increase rather than diminish. Effecting a coincidence between the two is an acute need.

There is a second tension that exists in the educational process, and that too goes back to the Hope commission.

At the time the Hope commission reported, there was a fairly formidable structure for monitoring of the educational process in place in Ontario. There were inspectors who came around and visited schools and testified to the boards that operated them as to their suitability, the competence of their teachers—quietly, but they did so—and reported to the ministry, which was then the department, on that.

That was a case in time when you were a number, ranging from a one to a seven. There were such wafflings as five plus and four minus and that sort of thing. You survived if you were four or above; you survived if you were three or above, probably, but you were really curiously looked at. You did not survive if you were a one or a two.

The ranking process was numerical at that time. A hiring agent could call the Department of Education and find out a teacher's number if he were applying for a job. The teacher did not know the number, but the department knew the number. So that monitoring process was in place.

At that point in time there was an examination process in place. It was composed of three parts. You wrote departmental examinations for your

grade 12 diploma and for your grade 13 diploma, variously known as a secondary school diploma and a secondary school honour graduation diploma. The grade 12 diploma was ordinarily written in two parts. There were three subjects ordinarily allocated to grade 11, and the balance of the subjects were written in grade 12. The grade 13 subjects were written simultaneously, presumably, although some people took several years to do that.

At that time, nine papers were regarded as completion of the honour graduation requirement and the languages all counted for two. Mathematics counted for three. The goal of many subject areas at that time was to take their place in the grade 13 panoply of offerings. In 1950, geography was the big contender. It had not found a place at that time; it later did find a place.

There was a formidable monitoring system in place at that point. It became apparent, however, that as developments took place, as the population grew, as local jurisdictions became more sensibly responsible and concerned about education in their own environment, what occurred was a gradual shift or decentralization of that process.

The key date for that would be 1969, with the creation of the county boards of education. I cannot speak too personally to the difficulties that arose around that transfer of responsibility, because at that time I was in the city of Toronto and we were insulated from all of that activity by the earlier creation of the Metropolitan Toronto School Board, which gave us our own wrestling match at home to worry about, not the county boards and the reallocations and realignments of responsibilities that accompanied them.

Mr. Jackson: You have an expert on the far left.

Mr. Green: Yes, I am aware of that.

Mr. Jackson: Mike Breagh.

Mr. Green: That is right. As a matter of fact, he is very good in that whole arena.

However, in 1969, with the creation of the larger units of administration, much of the responsibility for monitoring the progress of the educational system was, I think appropriately in many respects, handed over to those systems. They appointed their own supervisory officers, an opportunity by the way that the larger centres had at an earlier point. If you were big enough, you could appoint your own inspectors and you did not need to use the ministry's at earlier points. Not too many jurisdictions had that possibility. After 1969, all of the jurisdictions assumed the responsibility for monitoring the

quality of education in their own arena, so the local boards appointed their own supervisory officers and undertook their own inspection processes.

That second tension about who is going to run the shop has remained strong in the educational system as well. So the question of central versus local control of items like the curriculum, like the evaluation processes, like the organization and establishment of schools, has always been a bit of a tug of war; and depending upon the source of the greatest amount of resources, the source of greatest influence was usually found. So there tended to be a situation very often in many arenas, where he who paid the piper called the tune; so that an area like Metropolitan Toronto or the city of Toronto, with an incredible tax base and with less support from the ministry than other areas of the province deservedly should get, was inclined frequently to challenge the ministry's ability necessarily to second guess what it was capable of doing. With the increases in urban centres, those challenges have occasionally become more frequent. On the other hand, if one were pretty well dependent upon the Ministry of Education for financing arrangements and developments, one paid far more heed to its activities. So that tension remains between the two as well.

The third tension that emerges very strongly in our history can be simplistically put, and on occasion I may put it simplistically. It is a question of whether in teaching you are concerned with teaching the child or the subject. The question of process as opposed to content becomes acute.

There is no question when children begin school—junior kindergarten, kindergarten, primary grades—that the subject orientation is arbitrary, imposed, interferes with obvious learnings that the child is pursuing on his own, so that for the most part, particularly in the primary and junior grades, the dominant philosophy is that we are teaching the child, the whole child. The content is integrated, so we endeavour not to fragment the subjects; except for special reasons and even then we are a little reluctant.

One of the things that is troubling elementary teachers right at the moment is that the incursion of specificity, of specialization, appears to be coming more and more frequent. Areas that you can think of immediately that have developed over this period of time—two I will cite: music is one and French is the other, or the second language is the other. I should put it that way because there will be English immersion activities in the sense as well as French activities.

Those two have led to more and more specialized teaching in those primary grades and there is a concern that the fragmentation of dealing with the child inhibits learning.

At the other end of the spectrum, however, society has a habit after a while of saying: "Well, all right, we have gone along far enough now. We better get down to business here. What do you know?" And in order to find out what you know, we find it more convenient to deal with specialized knowledge and to test on content. We find too that older students, having had some exposure to a subject area, require someone teaching them with greater knowledge of that than had been common earlier. So that our secondary schools are still, by and large, organized on subject lines and teachers are identified as teachers of history, teachers of French, teachers of science, teachers of mathematics, rather than teachers of students.

1440

I am putting those as extremes because all teachers I think would regard themselves as teachers of students, but certainly at older grades they would identify a subset of content area with which they had a lot more confidence than other sets of content area, and that question of when do you shift, or do you shift, has emerged very strongly.

In the Hope commission report, there was no question that any shift should take place. The curriculum was outlined most specifically. "We recommend that, for the first and second years of the secondary school curriculum, (i) the following subjects be obligatory for all students: English; social studies; general mathematics; general science, including agricultural science; physical and health education; home economics or general shop work; oral French or special courses in French; art; music; religious education or ethics. (ii) there be no optional subjects."

So they were very firm on the content area and it was described in a specialized fashion. When we come to Living and Learning, however, they recommended that nothing, in effect, be a compulsory subject but that subjects be broadened and the range of offerings be determined by the school. They had confidence in the ability of the professional staff to determine that. Those are the two extremes.

The developments that took place between 1950 and today relate variously to those swings of the pendulum. The Hope commission was perceived as looking at the totality of education. In 1964, the reorganized plan of studies, known

more colloquially as the Robarts plan, was looked at as addressing secondary education.

The Hall-Dennis committee was appointed to inquire, originally, into education in the elementary schools but came back and said it did not feel its mandate could be accommodated in that period and asked that it be extended to include the secondary schools as well, and it was.

These reports, by the way, were never fully given a yea or a nay by governments of the time; not an unusual phenomenon. Governments selected from the recommendations in each case those that appeared most compatible with the direction the system was going and the direction that people felt they could live with comfortably in terms of changes in the educational system. So that neither was fully implemented but both conveyed their influence in other directions.

The Hall-Dennis committee influence was felt in the secondary schools in 1970 with the undertaking of the credit system and the relative abolition of compulsory subjects. During the early periods of the 1970s, gradual reefs were taken in that complete emancipation so that English, mathematics and history were restored as being essential to an understanding of the world, so people felt that secondary school students should have those as compulsory subjects.

In 1980, a review of secondary schools was undertaken again and that culminated in OSIS, Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, which came into effect in 1984. It tended to cover a middle line, as I will point out in a moment when I indicate the programs that are currently available in schools. About half of the secondary school program is now obligatory and half of the program is elective.

That third tension, the question of content or process, has always been central to the education debate, and those are the three issues that history has provided us with.

Our current set of goals address themselves to an image of the learner that is implicit in our guidelines and policy statements as a self-motivated, self-directed problem solver, aware of both the process and use of learning and deriving a sense of self-worth and confidence from a variety of accomplishments.

Now, you do not have to walk very far from this building to know that we do not always succeed in leading all students towards that goal, but the goal in itself is probably more important today than it was when it was enunciated and appeared in *Issues and Directions*, a publication

that was undertaken in 1978 or 1979—I am sorry; I should have that date.

The reason I am suggesting it is more appropriate now is that it is more and more difficult to identify the specific content of learning that is going to be relevant to an individual's activities several years ahead than it was at that time. This is particularly true in terms of specific technical or manual skills, and as a result our technical education programs have been struggling in that respect. It is harder and harder to address people to a specific end.

In recent years, we have tried to translate them into practice in the elementary schools. If you will turn to the next two or three, and I am going to wind up rather rapidly, the next three or four pages outline the programs as they exist in elementary education for the primary and junior divisions, for grades 7 and 8, the first two grades of the intermediate division, and for the secondary schools, commencing in grade 9. That includes the last two years at the intermediate division and three years at the senior division.

I would point out that the primary and junior divisions—and really this philosophy encompasses junior kindergarten and kindergarten, which are not universally available but substantially available across the province now, those are optional for boards to offer; grades 1 to 3 inclusive constitute the primary division, grades 4 to 6 inclusive constitute the junior division.

That seems a little intimidating, and you will note that these particular subjects are addressed in various degrees and with various emphasis in various jurisdictions. Not all jurisdictions, for example, would offer heritage languages, although a significant number do. Not all jurisdictions offer religious education, although a significant number do. I am picking soft spots, by the way. I know that all offer arithmetic, measurement and geometry. I know that all offer reading, listening and speaking. I know that all work at writing and handwriting, so you will find a mixture of emphases there. To a great degree, that is determined by the local conditions and the local environment in which the program is delivered.

You will notice that when we move to grades 7 and 8, we introduce a minimum amount of instructional time, and that is where the content area begins to make its presence felt most strongly. To that time we endeavour to integrate program right across the curriculum; at that time we begin to feel that there had better be an identifiable source or emphasis on those subjects, and those suggestions about minimal

amounts of instructional time are made. You will notice on the next page, "The remaining hours of instructional time shall be allocated to personal and practical studies to be selected from," and then there is a range of optional material.

Secondary school outlines the requirements for an OSSD, the Ontario secondary school diploma. In addition to that, I should really have an additional slide to indicate that we offer in secondary schools what are known as OACs, Ontario academic courses, which are designed to prepare students for further study, for the most part at universities, in those particular disciplines, and those constitute the measurement for university admission.

The student normally requires six OACs. They may be taken either as a part of the Ontario secondary school diploma, or subsequent to the Ontario secondary school diploma or both. You can make them part of your diploma requirements and take the additional ones after. Ordinarily, universities request standing in six of those for admission to any of their courses. The particular subject matter varies according to course. Approximately half, 16, of the 30 credits required for a diploma are compulsory and 14 credits are elective, selected from a wide range of available courses.

The documents that flesh out those are The Formative Years, which enunciates the philosophy behind the program for elementary schools, and Education in the Primary and Junior Divisions. The document that outlines the program and diploma requirements for the intermediate and senior divisions is known as Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions.

1450

That has not been a very thorough history and it perhaps has not addressed the transitional means. Just to point to one of the elements on the committee's agenda, I would like to indicate that if we look at diploma requirements for the Ontario secondary school diploma, there are developments in the secondary schools that relate more particularly to transitions to the workforce or transitions to adulthood than previously, and these are relatively recent phenomena.

A significant development took place about 1965 with the introduction of the colleges of applied arts and technology. Prior to that, post-secondary education was pretty well confined to (a) universities, (b) apprenticeships or (c) training provided by the private sector. Following that time, a significant portion of post-secondary education has been provided by the colleges of applied arts and technology.

We have strong connections with both the colleges and the universities in the design and organization of secondary school programming. Two big developments have occurred recently. I suppose the biggest is co-operative education, which takes students out of the school for a significant part of their learning and is attached to and accredited by the receipt of one of their credits given by the school system. There are currently 38,000 students enrolled in co-op programs. The growth rate over the last couple of years has been at about the rate of 25 per cent a year, and that is a growing phenomenon.

We have introduced other initiatives in connection with transition to employment, but no doubt the committee will hear about those from other submitters along the way.

I would emphasize two other factors. First, there is the increase in the number of young adult learners in the secondary schools. This is addressed to adult education. Our responsibilities lie, statutorily, with students six to 16, but we leak over the edges. We leak downwards in connection with junior kindergarten and kindergarten, and currently with our new moves into day care. We leak upwards in the fact that the vast majority of students still target age 18 as the school leaving age, and we still retain a number to that age. Past that, we encourage the return of and provide programs for people as old as 90, so there are leaks on both ends of our spectrum.

That has been pretty fast and I apologize if it is not thorough enough for the committee's needs. There are more reports that one could provide at any point in time, because nothing is more frequently looked at than the educational system, in my view. Indeed, sometimes one wonders how the plant grows when it is pulled up so frequently to see how its roots are doing. None the less, we welcome the scrutiny.

In order to provide these programs and to reconcile these dichotomies, Mr. Larratt-Smith is going to indicate how we try to run and govern the system and what the role of the ministry is in that.

Mr. Larratt-Smith: Like Mr. Green, I have brought some overheads along. Since we do not have a projector, some hard copies will be passed out. There is one additional single sheet that I will reference when we get to it as to where it fits in. By and large, these are simply a rough framework or skeleton from which to talk.

In preparing these remarks and looking at the background of some of the members of this committee, I was reminded about the old adage that one must not teach one's grandmother to

suck eggs. Given some of the variety of background in education that is present at the table, I can only say that I come to these comments from a different position than Mr. Green, I suppose, in that he has moved from education into government and I am moving from government into education.

With that as background, I will start by reminding the committee about a pretty obvious fact, and that is the issue of jurisdiction, the fact that the Constitution Act so unequivocally gives the provinces, and of course the province of Ontario, the responsibility for education. Unlike other areas where jurisdiction is so mixed and where at every step one must turn to the federal government and decide what is its and what is ours and how the two interplay, education, except for some leakage at the fringes as Mr. Green would put it, in manpower and so forth, is a provincial area of jurisdiction under section 93 of the Constitution.

However, it is worth noting that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, now a part of our Constitution, does make a vast difference in the way in which we operate because our jurisdiction is no longer untrammelled; it is guided by the rights and freedoms outlined in that charter, and of course that speaks to a major growth in the kind of litigation experienced in the education sector, as in many other sectors.

Moving along, from a sort of political science point of view, it has always seemed to me that when you have responsibility for an area in government and you ask, "How am I going to take action?" there are basically about four different tools of public policy to make things happen. I have listed them on the second slide.

There is the expenditure tool, either direct expenditure—you buy it directly and make it happen, whether it is a road, a sewer or a school—or indirect expenditure where you pay someone else—a school board, a municipality or some other agent—to make the thing happen. Then, second, there is regulation. If the first is the carrot the second is the stick, where by legislation or regulation you require that a certain action take place.

Those are the two main ones and the two I intend to concentrate on, although it is worth noting in passing that fiscal policy often imposes a greater impact on the way things work than do direct expenditure or regulatory policies, and of course in the overall framework of things, and particularly in the rules governing assessment at the local level, that is very true of education.

Finally and particularly, just to note the category of influence programs, where a government does not absolutely mandate something it may not pay for it to happen but it occurs through the provision of information or expertise, through the encouragement, facilitation, influencing of what happens; and that is a very predominant tool in the educational system and speaks to the whole area of program Mr. Green has just been addressing.

I said I was going to concentrate my remarks on expenditure and on regulation. Turning to the issue of the Ministry of Education expenditures, one immediately comes up against the general legislative grants, which are an example of indirect expenditure, of money that is flowed to school boards for them to provide education, the Ministry of Education primarily not being the provider of such service. They are to a large degree unconditional grants, although certain recent initiatives had conditions attached to them, and there is a category under the general legislative grants called "Other," which is related to specific purposes.

They also depend upon matching of local taxation and upon a principle of attempting to equalize the availability of resources across the province to school boards in the provision of education by providing a greater percentage of funding to those boards whose local tax base is relatively narrower than others.

In terms of the roles currently presented—it is the next slide if you will just look past the one we have been talking to—the current shared-funding approach involves three major parties. The province establishes the GLG allocation and the capital allocation for boards, establishes also what are to be deemed as approved costs and establishes the local share required to fund those approved costs through equalized mill rates.

School boards in turn establish their own operating and capital budgets, and they determine the property taxes required for both approved and unapproved expenditures. They then submit requisitions to municipalities for the raising of those funds. Municipalities establish the local mill rates, collect the taxes and remit those taxes to the school boards.

That is currently how the system works. I am going over this very, very quickly rather than getting into any detail. I am sure there will be lots of opportunity for experts to expand on that subject at the committee's desire.

1500

Going back to the previous slide, the other main area of ministry expenditures to boards, in

terms of funding to boards, is the provision of capital, currently \$237 million in this fiscal year. An even larger component, nearly \$500 million, is paid by the government of Ontario directly to the teachers' superannuation fund as the matching contribution to that fund for the moneys the teachers themselves contribute. In this instance, Ontario is the sponsor of the teachers' pension plan, rather than the employer of the teacher, which is the individual school board.

Finally, the ministry provides direct services of certain kinds. These include the operation of provincial schools, primarily for the deaf and blind. It operates a very large correspondence education school, the Independent Learning Centre; and it operates, in addition, several other student-and-teacher programs of exchange and development of one kind or another.

By and large, the comment I would like to leave you with is that the Ministry of Education is a very small dog with a very, very big tail. I can best demonstrate this if you will look at the single sheet that breaks out the ministry's current year estimates in that regard. The budget of the ministry is currently just under \$4.8 billion, of which basically \$4 billion is in the general legislative grant. There is another \$250 million, roughly speaking, in capital grants and \$500 million in the teachers' superannuation fund. If you add those together, factoring in some of the other very minor transfer payments, you have over 97 per cent of the ministry's budget right there.

Then you will note that the direct expenditures of the ministry, in both the operation of provincial schools and the ILC and then the regional and head office operations of the ministry, make up the balance, which is somewhat less than three per cent of the total. That is an important perspective to have when you compare the Ministry of Education with ministries such as Community and Social Services, Health, Transportation or Natural Resources, where there is a very large amount of direct service provided to the public. By and large, we are in the business of funding school boards to provide education, rather than doing it ourselves.

Leaving the subject of education expenditure and finance and moving on to the regulatory tool of government, I have listed for you on the next page the acts of general application. By and large there are individual acts of the Legislature having to do with certain school boards in parts of the province, but these are the acts of general application for which the ministry is responsible: the Education Act, which is the major compendi-

um, as I am sure you are aware, and a number of other more specialized pieces of legislation.

Again, I have listed simply the three major regulations or families of regulations that are of general application: the GLG regulation, which is why I speak to a family, because it is an annual event related to the GLG of a specific year; and then regulation 262 which has primarily to do with the operation of schools, and regulation 269 having to do with teachers' qualifications.

Also, in the light of my earlier comment about the changes affecting us as a result of the charter and other events, it is interesting to note that litigation has become an increasingly important part of our business, as for many other areas of government, and we have been handling approximately 15 major court cases over the past 12 months.

Mr. Green spoke of the subject of governance, and "governance" is a word that, I suppose, self-defines in an education context. But, essentially, I have put my own self-definition down, if you like, as being that it is the setting of the rules for the operation of schools boards, the election of trustees, boundaries, all the aspects of operation of school boards.

We set rules for private schools and home instruction, the mention of satisfactory instruction which is referenced in education legislation; we set rules for teachers; rules for the certification of the supervisory officers, whom Mr. Green referred to as being those individuals who are now responsible for the quality of education as delivered through the school boards; rules for students in terms of requirements with regard to age and other factors; rules related to special education requirements of students; rules regarding courses of study, and rules regarding the evaluation of programs and proponents of the school system. That generally, it seems to me, is what we refer to when we speak of governance in the school system.

Turning to the ministry's context in using 1987 statistics as a base, I thought you might be interested in these basic statistics. In terms of overall service delivery, the ministry relates to 161 school boards, which in turn operate 4,500 schools with a total of more than 9,300 teachers and 1.8 million students. By way of comparison, there are 485 private schools and just under 6,200 students in those private schools in the province, to complete the total picture.

In terms of what we have tended to call partnerships in the operation of the school system, the ministry has traditionally worked and continues to work very closely with trustees'

groups under the umbrella of the Ontario School Trustees' Council, with teacher groups under the umbrella of the Ontario Teachers' Federation and with various administrative groups which do not currently have an all-encompassing umbrella.

We also have important relations with, if you like, "consumers"—which I place in quotation marks here—the people who are very concerned with the product of the education system, obviously starting with parents and parents' groups; also the post-secondary institutions that receive our graduates, business that employs them, labour that relates to them in many important ways throughout their working careers and, increasingly, a number of special communities which see themselves as primarily related to the traditional public school community, the separate school community: francophone education issues, native education, ethnic and religious groupings of one kind or another. There is an increasing diversity of special communities that see themselves as "consumers" and important stakeholders in the business of education.

Finally, given the constitutional context that I began with, we have important relations with other governments: with the federal government, notably the Secretary of State's department on minority language education, with other provincial governments, with the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada, which is the composite group of all those provincial education ministers, and internationally—as the ultimate governors or deliverers of education for this part of Canada.

1510

In summary, I wanted to leave you with a sense of what the ministry believes its role to be under all these circumstances. The ministry sees its role as primarily one of policymaking, of setting the rules for those three aspects: the governance, the program and the financing of education in Ontario.

Secondarily, the ministry sees itself as having a resourcing role and, obviously, a very major resourcing role, given the dollar figures we have talked about in terms of providing those major transfer payments through the general legislative grants, but also through making much more modest program-related expenditures which are often the lever or the cutting edge to pump-prime new activities or new ways of looking at things.

Finally, and a major source of interest and concern, is the focus on an audit role, on ensuring that outputs have occurred, that value for money has been received. That is a difficult role to perform with the balance of local and provincial responsibility, but it is one which the ministry is

increasingly addressing. That, I am sure, will be something we can talk about later.

Mr. Green: Two phenomena remain, Madam Chairman. It is interesting that in the Hope commission report, there was a minority report, a major minority report. There was not a minority report in Living and Learning. The major minority report connected with the Hope commission had to do both with its recommendations in respect of the Roman Catholic school system and with its recommendations in respect to French-language school systems.

Sometimes we feel, I think, that we stand still for a long period while we study things. In both of these there have been significant developments since 1950. Mme Carrier-Fraser will talk about the first and Mr. Clifford will talk about the second.

Mrs. Carrier-Fraser: What I will do is basically provide you with the historical background and indicate where we are in French-language education and leave it at that. Just relating to the Hope commission, Mr. Green was saying that he has probably been chosen because he was more experienced—

Mr. Green: Older is what.

Mrs. Carrier-Fraser: Older, and he was entering the teaching profession when the Hope commission recommendations were being put into place. I was starting into the system but at the other end. I was seven years old in 1950. Some of the recommendations I have lived through while in the school system itself. There were about 20 recommendations in the Hope commission relating to French-language education, and I will just go quickly because you will see the changes that have occurred. It is not that long a period of time when you look at it.

Some of the recommendations in the Hope commission report were that French could be taught as a subject in the French-language schools and boards were allowed, with the permission of the minister, to offer instruction in French. Language of communication, basically, should be in English. It was allowed to be in French if the pupils could not understand.

The official correspondence from the Department of Education at the time had to be in English and also special French was taught in secondary schools. Special French was for French-language pupils, and I remember that in grades 11 and 12. For instance, I was in a high school where about 95 per cent of the pupils were French-speaking. All teachers were French, except for the principal who was a Scotsman. Most of our teachers were French-speaking but all subjects were taught in

English. I did not understand English, but we managed to pull through anyway.

That was the system at the time up until later on in the 1960s. This is when really the history of French-language education falls into a legal context. In 1968, which is 20 years ago, the Report of the Committee on French-Language Schools of Ontario, the Bériault report, was issued. At the same time, when large school boards were established, around 1968-69, legal recognition was given in the Education Act to French-language elementary schools.

At that time, boards of education were authorized within the Education Act to establish French-language secondary schools or classes. Also, to give some governance to the French-language population, boards were given the authority to establish French-language advisory committees. They were made up of seven members: three trustees from the board and four French-speaking members elected at large from the French-language community.

Then things moved quite rapidly after that. Somebody asked how many reports were written after the Hope commission. If we start going through the number of reports on French language—and I liked Mr. Green's comments about pulling up the roots so many times to look at whether they are growing or not—you will see that there have been quite a few studies done also.

The Ministerial Commission on French-Language Secondary Education was done basically by Symons, the Symons report. This one dealt mostly with governance. The Bériault report dealt a lot with programs in the schools. It dealt with guidance, French-language programs to be taught, etc.; Symons dealt mostly with governance. It recommended the establishment of a Council of French-Language Schools, which was the Conseil supérieur and later on became the Council for Franco-Ontarian Education. Also, it recommended the creation of the Languages of Instruction Commission of Ontario, which was then created in 1973.

Moving on quickly, in 1976 the report of the Ottawa-Carleton Review Commission, the Mayo report, came out. It recommended the establishment of a French-language school board in the Ottawa-Carleton area. The response at the time by the government was no, because there was a very negative response by the public at large. However, it recommended that the boards of education for Ottawa and Carleton establish English- and French-language panels. That was in 1979, as a response to the Mayo recommenda-

tion. Again, in the area the response was very negative and no action was taken on that.

In 1982, a committee was established called the Joint Committee on the Governance of French-Language Elementary and Secondary Education. This was chaired by Berchmans Kipp, the assistant deputy minister at the time, and members of the French-language community were represented on that.

I skipped one step. In 1972, when they established the Council of French-Language Schools, this group was chaired by Laurier Carrière, who was the same level as an assistant deputy minister of French-language education but was not officially named assistant deputy minister. The first ADM for French-language education was appointed in 1977.

Following the Symons report, a lot of major ministry initiatives were also put into place: special funds for French-language schools; French-language consultative services to help isolated French-language schools across the province; special money for development of French-language material; funds for professional development of teachers; cultural activities, etc., were established. A lot of action was taken at that time to ensure that the French-language schools could function properly.

In 1982, with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms being enacted in April of that year, the report of the joint committee came out at the same time, recommending to the government that if the boards operating French-language schools—and there was a number at the time; there were so many reports, I am not sure whether it was 300 or 500—if boards had at least 500 pupils in the system, then they were to be electing trustees. The report came out that year.

Also, just a year later in 1983, for the first time pupils graduating from French-language secondary schools were required to have français as a compulsory subject. In French-language schools, up to that time, English was a compulsory subject, but French was not. French was taken, but it was not compulsory; so in 1983, after some negotiations and after the secondary education review project report, français became a compulsory subject in French-language secondary schools.

In 1983, the white paper came out, the government proposal in response to the report of the joint committee. Immediately after that, probably about two months later, l'Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario and l'Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens, one a French-Canadian association

and the other a French teachers' association, decided to take the government to court on some of the questions in the Education Act related to numbers, because schools were to be established where numbers warranted.

Instead of waiting for a court decision and debating it in the court—some questions were referred to the court by the Lieutenant Governor—in the meantime other negotiations were taking place as far as French-language governance was concerned and a new committee was established called the Sullivan committee to study, again, governance of French-language schools, with a report to be submitted in February.

1520

A bill was introduced in December 1983 to remove from the Education Act the words "where numbers warrant" so that every French-language child would have a right to an education. This bill died on the Order paper because it was introduced at the end of December before the session rose.

In 1984, the Sullivan report was submitted, and it dealt with various ways for the francophones in the province to have governance, but it did not recommend one in particular. In June 1984, the Court of Appeal rendered its decision. It indicated, first of all, that two clauses in the Education Act were inconsistent with the charter. It said that "where numbers warrant" went against the charter and it should be taken out, because our Education Act at the time said 25 pupils had to be assembled at the elementary level and 20 at the secondary level before a board had to offer French-language education. This was later removed.

I have also indicated that the francophones in the province had a right to manage and to control their own schools and that the white paper submitted by the government seemed to respond to that need.

On June 28, 1984, Bill 119 was introduced, and Bill 119 passed that year. It is the one that changed some of the language-of-instruction responsibility and also granted, within the Education Act, the right of even one child to a French-language education. The board had to provide, whether by purchase of service or within the system itself.

A bill on governance, Bill 160, was introduced for the first time in that year also, in December 1984. That was introduced, and it was made very clear by the minister at the time that she was introducing it because she wanted the population to see the type of legislation that would be introduced later on. It was introduced in Decem-

ber and died on the order paper. Another one was introduced in June 1985, Bill 28, which was then removed and replaced by Bill 75. I was appointed acting deputy minister in 1983, so I followed all these things.

Bill 75 was introduced in 1985. In January 1986, the Ottawa-Carleton French-Language Education Advisory Committee was established, the Roy committee, to make recommendations to the government about the establishment of a French-language school board in Ottawa-Carleton. Bill 75, as you know, received royal assent in July 1986 and established at the same time the Metropolitan Toronto French-Language School Council, which was passed. Very few people noticed that it happened, but in November 1988, within the Metro structure, a public French-language school council will be established, which will add, basically, a seventh board to the Metro situation.

In January 1987, the Roy report was released, analysed, and ministry officials started looking at the various possibilities for the legislation which would lead to the establishment of the Ottawa-Carleton French-language School Board.

At the same time, a study group for Prescott-Russell was established to study the impact of Bill 30 and Bill 75 on the Prescott-Russell area. That report was released in November 1987.

Just lately, in April 1988, Bill 109 was introduced, the Ottawa-Carleton French-language School Board legislation, and received royal assent in June 1988.

Really, a lot of the things that have been happening are related basically to the governance of French-language schools.

As far as curriculum guidelines and the programs within our French-language schools across the province are concerned, what we develop for our English-language schools we also do for our French-language schools. It is never exactly the same document, however. We always adapt it to the needs of the French-language population and some of our guidelines, as a matter of fact, are developed strictly for French-language schools.

When you look at français, obviously, our *histoire* and *étude contemporaine*, quite a few of the units in the guidelines are different from the units that we have in English-language schools, etc.

Regarding the Hall commission report, I talked about the official correspondence being strictly in English and Duncan indicated at the beginning that what we do is done in both official languages, basically, across the province for all

French-language schools. For special programs, when you look at co-op ed or anything else, there are always funds put aside to deal with French-language issues and priorities within the French-language community.

Mr. Green: Frank, start separate schools.

Mr. Clifford: "Start separate schools," and he says we are just about through.

Rather than highlighting each of the specific bills, etc., I would like to just to take you quickly through the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s and the 1980s as they applied to the Roman Catholic separate school system in the province. When I speak to it, I speak to it as a part of the public branch of education, publicly funded, small-p public, if you wish.

In the 1950s, the separate school system was almost exclusively an elementary school system. Above the grade 8 level there were some truly private type schools, generally administered by religious orders; tuition was charged, they were academic oriented and probably true to the charge that they were academic élite schools.

In the 1960s, there was growth in the separate school system which paralleled the growth in the public school system, certainly at the elementary level, as new schools were built, as more youngsters were attending, more teachers were appointed and the leadership role became available to the laity. There was more acceptance, more recognition and I believe more respect of the separate school system as an elementary school system.

There began to be more boards which were venturing into the grades 9 and 10 level, continuing into the 9 and 10 level, with a minimum of funding. In the late 1960s, there came the organized action towards completion, and the word "completion" became not a battle cry but at least a directive that the separate school people worked towards and thought towards.

In the 1970s, particularly the early 1970s, there was increased political action for completion. Obviously as well, in the early 1970s, the answer on completion was "No." It was made clear, it was made obvious, there was no question about it and there was a regrouping in the separate school system at that time.

The thrust then became towards full funding for grades 9 and 10. I recall the first amount that was talked about for full funding in the 9 and 10 level was about \$14 million. More money came to the grades 9 and 10 level in the separate school system in the 1970s in the way of weighting factors. In fairness, those weighting factors increased every year. Also, just as true at that

time was that the separate school boards feared, each year, whether the weighting factor would even be there, let alone increase. It should be known that when the separate school boards entered the 1980s, at the 9 and 10 level they were almost at 90 per cent of the funding that the public school boards would receive.

In the 1980s, in moving towards the completed separate school system, the secondary education review project, the ultimate report on Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, opened up a new avenue, a new interest for the separate school boards, because secondary education was being reviewed totally. It was not a case of saying: "We're new; they're old. They're established; we're the rookies on the block." It was looking at secondary school education as a new look, and the separate school people found that they had some things to say and that they had some things to offer to that review.

The thrust still—and I find it interesting—in the early 1980s was for equal funding at 9 and 10. There were more pupils who came to the separate school system at the private side. Obviously, at the private side there was a diversity of means of keeping grades 11, 12 and 13 going; tuition was charged, parishes were assessed, bingo in its greatest Catholic form continued, and there were lotteries, etc. I am not sad to have been a part of the kind of sacrifice that was needed for a particular thrust that you believed in and you wanted to keep going.

1530

With 1984, of course, came an announcement that there was now potential for a completed separate school system—not a new system but an extended system—and that is an emotional-level difficulty that continues today. In the unit that I work in, we still receive a good bit of correspondence about Bill 30 and a good bit of that correspondence is answering in reply that this was not a system that was new, this was a system that was extended and completed, and there is quite a bit of disagreement on that, obviously.

I want to talk a bit about the Planning and Implementation Commission and its role in the extension of the separate schools. I want to talk about it in order to pay tribute to it, and particularly to the first chairman of the Planning and Implementation Commission who, by his personal stature and the respect that he brought to it, allowed that group to initiate the changes, to administer the changes, to approve the changes, to reject some of the changes. They did that without legislation in the first year. They did that

without regulations in the second year. I have personal pride and respect for them.

I also wanted to mention the Planning and Implementation Commission because I brought no statistics with me today. If you were to ask, I obviously would facilitate quickly whatever statistics you need, but I get them from the Planning and Implementation Commission because everyone has his own definition of what it means in some areas about the statistics as they apply to Bill 30 and the Catholic funding.

I do know, though, that approximately three quarters of the province's 54 separate school boards have extended. Of the majority of the remaining, those that have not extended, I do not believe they ever asked for extension. The reasons will be either because of size or because of geography or because of financial restrictions. Two separate school boards have requested extension and have not had that extension approved. One separate school board had extension approved for one year and then had the approval withdrawn in the second year.

I would just like to highlight a few of the challenges that brought the completion of the separate school system into being, some of the things that I think, as your committee goes into its study, will be coming before you.

First of all, there was a cry about enrolment and there was a concern, I think a legitimate concern, by the public school people that there would be a large shift of enrolment away from the public schools and into the Roman Catholic high schools. No shift occurred. What happened was there was a retention. There was no big movement away at any given time from the public school system to the separate school system. The first retention came at the grade 10 level as young people were moving into grade 11. When the tuition was removed, there was some retention at that level. The greatest retention and the one that the separate school people target now is the retention at the end of grade 8 and the students moving into grade 9.

Separate school people today feel confident that they will be able to retain somewhere between 80 per cent and 90 per cent of their grade 8 graduates. Many of them are at that level and many of them are moving towards that level. Geography, for one thing, will always prevent 100 per cent retention.

Open access, which was a feature of the legislation, has been a good feature. It has had minimal response, but it was a good feature which said that the secondary schools are open

and youngsters are able to have access to both of those systems.

The grandfathering clause in Bill 30, which allowed youngsters who had started in a public high school and whose parents were separate school supporters to finish their career in that public high school, was an excellent feature of the legislation, and that obviously is being phased out year by year, but many, many young people took part in that.

Designation of teachers: One of the challenges that came early and one of the intents of the legislation was that no teacher would lose his or her position because of the implementation of Bill 30.

In the first year, without a regulation, there were lots of challenges with the designation of teachers. There was creativity, there was sincerity, there were all kinds of things that had to be sorted out.

With the regulation in place—and by the way, two coterminous boards at the local level do not need to follow the regulation if they enter into a local agreement with the consent of both boards—there are few disputes about designation. There were one or two this year, and may I say as straightforwardly as I can say it, those boards had disputes about other things as well as about designation.

To the best of our knowledge, there has not been a direct loss of position because of full funding. There are certain creative adjustments that have to be made when, for example, a teacher with certain qualifications is designated by the public board—and only public boards designate—and moves across to the separate school board, and the needs of the separate school board are not necessarily in those areas where the qualifications are. There is now a regulation called the retraining regulation, capped by a period of time and by an amount of money. A teacher can apply and be retrained in certain subject areas. The first two requests, by the way, for assistance under the retraining regulation have been received just this month.

Another challenge, at least in my mind, was the transfer of assessment on a certain date, January 1; a significant event. Sums of money were transferred over to the separate school boards from the assessment base of the public school boards. There was a need for tough regrouping on behalf of the public school boards. There was a need to exert discipline on behalf of the separate school boards, which were looking towards an instant type of school system and which found that, with some money coming in,

the temptations were great to move in one direction or another.

That movement of assessment was accompanied by the dropping of separate school trustees from public boards, Roman Catholic representatives on public boards. There was a plea for a topping up of those boards when the representatives came off. That did not happen, and now, as you know, there is a new base for trustee distribution being looked at.

A conditions regulation was put in place to extend the powers of the Ministry of Education, and two specific examples come out of this.

One example was a situation where a county Roman Catholic board was allowed to extend, but the operational funds were withheld from one of the schools in that county because the school at that particular time was not deemed to meet the viability characteristics.

There was another situation. I remember it well because I was the messenger sent out to tell the Roman Catholic school board that had extended into a particular city that it would not receive funds the next year and the school would have to be closed.

Then we come to accommodation. This obviously is the most visible exemplification of the Bill 30 funding. When the name of a public school board is removed from a school and the name of a separate school board is placed on that school, you have all of the feelings, emotions, attitudes, etc., that the bill and the initiative themselves provoked coming to the forefront.

Accommodation has been a challenge. It would be wrong to say it any other way. Accommodation issues have been disruptive. In fact, in my personal opinion, they have been wrong in some of the things we had to do in order to meet building needs and in the things that ultimately followed and happened to feelings and attitudes in the particular committees.

I think accommodation has been exaggerated by all the people involved, including ministry personnel. There are places in this province where accommodation has been moved from one board to another and the public school board has never said more than, "Could we initiate this transfer?" and the separate school board has said, "When can we start to use that particular school?"

We go all the way from accommodation transfers or leases that have been initiated by public boards, that have been worked out by two local boards. You have to find those on the back pages. They are not there. They are not the really explosive types of things that have come about.

We have facilitated some; we have tried to facilitate some; we have mediated some, and in one case, we have arbitrated.

Sharing is, at first blush, at least in my thoughts, one of the things that we should use. It was one of the things that seemed most practical. Here is a school with some space in it and here is a group that needs some space. Why could they not work together? Sharing, again in my opinion, has proven useful only on an interim basis. It can be used only if you say, "Three years from now, this particular school is going to belong to either one board or the other and the sharing concept is not going to continue."

There are schools in the province, obviously, that go contrary to that, but we tried to set up one particular sharing situation, which some of you know very well. We placed money into the situation and tried to use it as a model for the province, and it has broken down. Tensions over use of facilities—the use of the gymnasium, for example—have brought all kinds of tensions into it.

I would like to remind the committee that the arbitration process still remains, and I think it has to remain. It is the only vehicle by which surplus space in either system can be moved about without the consent of the two parties, or at least the consent of one of the parties. There is surplus space that is needed and can be used, but the frustration is that it is difficult without any mechanism to go out and move it about.

1540

There is continual difference—and I think your committee will hear about this—in mindset between the Ministry of Education and the local boards about how many pupils a school should hold. If I were to recount my daily work, this would be at the top of the list. We have in the ministry a rated capacity, when you build a school, of how many youngsters the school should hold; and the boards have a functional capacity, meaning how the school is being used, which dictates the use of the school.

The bottom line seems to me to be, what will a community support financially? That is really the function or the capacity of the school that people will think about. I think there is need for all of us in the province to work towards preventing the spectre of schools that have been built that did not need to be built and that would stand as memorials of those in the next 20 or 30 years.

My colleague to my right works on Bill 75. I work on Bill 30. Sometimes we talk about working on Bill 105 as we put the two of them together, because there are certainly places in the

province where the extension of separate schools and the movement of the francophone system have come together. We address those as *en bloc* transfers. What that really means is, for example, in December when school closes for the Christmas break, the principal, the staff, the students, the custodial staff, the secretarial staff, etc., go home, and the school is a public school when they say goodbye for Christmas. When they come back 10 short days later, the school has been moved over to the separate school board, with the same enrolment, the same staff, etc. There have been several of those in the province and some of them are being talked about at the moment.

I just have two or three things. It is presumptuous of me. If I were on your committee and thinking about separate schools, these would be some of the things that I would be thinking about.

First of all, "competition" is a good word between the two branches of the publicly funded system in the province. It is there; it is alive; it is well; it is escalating. I think it has to be accepted. I think it has to be encouraged and, most of all, I think it has to be controlled. I mean that from both branches' points of view.

Co-operation is taking place. More co-operation will follow. I am confident of that. Co-operative education is one example. Transportation which is shared, guidance information which is shared, services for special children—these are all not hopes for the future but things that are taking place right now.

I think the two branches have a common challenge in many ways, and I would use as an example technological education. The separate school boards have new-found opportunities for technical education. Some of the public school boards are anxious to transfer over some of the large shops which they are no longer using. These are philosophical-type decisions on where the technological thrust, etc., should be.

I think the two branches have opportunities in common. I think you find them in the stretching of the system, in early childhood education and in adult education. I think it is ridiculous in some places where it is being duplicated for the sake of being stamped either public or separate, not working together for greater opportunities.

Finally, I think they both have responsibilities in common, responsibilities in the thrust towards the improvement of literacy, retention of youngsters in school and transition to employment-type activities.

Mr. Green: I apologize for going a little over our time. I repeat our offer to provide informa-

tion. I would like to remind you that Bill Lipischak, who is the director of our program implementation and review branch, who is sitting in the back corner, will be with you through your hearings and will be our connector with you. If there is anything else you request, we will provide it.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Green. I would like to particularly thank the four representatives from the Ministry of Education for their very comprehensive review over the last hour and a half. You have certainly given us a lot of food for thought, everything from the history to separate school funding. I hope our committee will be able to move with a certain amount of sensitivity and not pull education up by its roots as we are examining the history and philosophy of education.

I think we will open up now for questions. You have them speechless. Mr. Reyecraft and Mr. Jackson.

Mr. Reyecraft: I would like, first of all, to address something that Mr. Green said during his presentation. He said that one of the fundamental issues confronting the education community at the moment is whether the system exists to serve the needs of each individual, of each pupil, whether it is there to allow the student to develop to his full human potential; or whether it is there to serve the needs of society, that is by providing employable individuals. You suggested that in your view we are now seeing a move from the former of those two situations to the latter, if I understood you correctly.

What evidence is there of that? What makes you say we are in the middle of such a shift at the moment?

Mr. Green: I would point in my own eyes to the report of the Premier's Council on technology and to the report of Mr. Radwanski on the relevance of secondary school education. There is the emphasis in both reports on our necessity to respond to an intensely competitive economic environment for the survival of our province and the style of living to which it has become accustomed. Accordingly, both of those reports tend to emphasize the extent to which we prepare our students for a future that will contribute to the society's future wellbeing.

We never move from one extreme to the other rapidly, but we move by that pendulum. By the way, I think that is echoed. I have a private theory. For example, Living and Learning occurred at the same time as the cultural revolution in China, the Kent State riots in the United States, the French student revolt in Paris

and the drastic reform of the British system. I do not think we are immune from winds of change as they move around the world. Just as one repudiates the authoritarian emphasis of prescriptive formulae on one generation, the next generation will react against its emancipation, looking for a bit more order in the case. What we are seeing now, I think, is a request for more order in the case.

Most of these reports, however, use words like "skills," which I have found are very loosely defined. Everybody assumes they know what they mean and it turns out we are not talking about the same thing at all. I am in danger of going on too long, but those are two pieces of evidence I would cite.

Mr. Reyecraft: In your answer, you touched on something else I wanted to inquire about and that is what is going on in other places in the world. You talked about trends towards a centralized curriculum in England, and in the US, I believe. How far along are those changes now?

Mr. Green: Here I am on a little precarious ground and might have to get more information. The change in England is fairly far along, I would say. Curriculum in England traditionally has been the province of the teacher, or the province of the school at any rate. Examination has been the province of the state. Their means of regulating content, if they wanted to, was via that examination route, but the teacher had a fairly free hand in curriculum.

That is being reduced under the new legislation being introduced by Mrs. Thatcher's government. There is a real emphasis on the development of a more centralized curriculum, but at the same time there is the removal from local education authorities of their intermediate role. It is as if the board's powers were being allocated down to the school with the parent population of that school having the ability to contract directly with the central government regarding the allocation of resources. There is a fair centralizing effort taking place there.

The United States, probably in response to A Nation at Risk, the Imperative for Educational Reform, published about three or four years ago, and various offspring of A Nation at Risk spawned in all the states, is tending to look at a more centralized curriculum too; basically along the road of minimum competency, although they do not like that phrase. They are trying to identify a common core, particularly in math and such. It is to be borne in mind that the Department of Education in the US government has a more

formidable role in the educational system; indeed, we have no counterpart for it in this country. Its role comes largely as a result of its funding abilities with various title grants, so that it has tremendous influence.

In the Japanese system, curiously, they are concerned to go the other way. They currently have an incredibly centralized system, one that is extremely monolithic, a system that leans very heavily on competition to a considerable degree, on rote learning to a considerable degree and on adherence and conformity to a considerable degree, so much so that the Nakasone commission in Japan has felt it is stifling their creativity, their initiative and such. They are looking for ways to loosen up their system, to remove some of the stress and some of the competitive element that is in it. So the world goes in different directions at different times.

1550

Mr. Jackson: Duncan, I appreciate your walk through the history of education. I would like to note for the record that Duncan will not be with us in the form of being with the ministry for much longer. However, I would like to ask him if he would be available in whatever private capacity he has to come back and discuss Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, since he had a major hand in that document in terms of the original inquiry and report to the ministry. That basically was your document. I do not wish to put you on the spot, but I just realized now that, during OSIS, we would not have the benefit of being able to request your attendance with some degree of certainty.

Mr. Green: I will be glad to come back.

Mr. Jackson: That is appreciated very much.

Mr. Green: No problem.

Madam Chairman: That is September 12, if you would like to make that note on your calendar.

Mr. Jackson: He is entitled to a brief holiday after the end of his August tenure.

The second question I have, Duncan, with respect to your presentation, is that you talked about trends globally. There has been no reference to other provinces, yet we are aware of other provincial trends. With the exception of the francophone and the separate schools, there is the element of the private schools, which was not touched on by anyone in a presentation, and also initiatives in each of the provinces.

I guess it would be an unfair question to ask, "Why did you exclude it?" The time prevented you from going into all that kind of detail, and I

appreciate that. Where can we, as a committee, get an analysis or some of that information? How do we pull that together? That is one of the areas of interest I had indicated early. Since this was an area of inquiry I requested, I made specific reference to initiatives in other provinces and where we might get some analysis of that, whether it is through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, or some other body. I know there are some initiatives.

Mr. Green: We would be able to supply that with CMEC, through our education liaison branch. It would help if we knew specific areas of interest; for example, evaluation or treatment of private schools or whatever. Much of that information would come from CMEC, which maintains a library of comparative developments province to province.

Mr. Jackson: I wish to give a specific example, although I was looking for something more general in terms of trends. Mr. Clifford gave us a window to some future thinking with some future challenges. With all due respect, Duncan, you gave us an on-the-one-hand and on-the-other-hand type of presentation, and that was fine, but I think we are looking for some of the other things for which the provinces have a two-, three- or four-year window in terms of development. Is there a committee like this operating in any other province? My understanding is that there is in at least one province.

I know this fall we are going to be doing a whole review of semestering. I understand there is a recent report out in Alberta that really condemns semestering. I have requested a copy of that and it has been sent to me. To the extent those kinds of radical initiatives in education, if we can call them that, are being considered and for what reason they are being considered, I think we would like to know as well that your ministry is at least sensitive to them, is analysing them or is even embracing parts of them and recommending that to the minister.

Mr. Green: Is that a—

Mr. Jackson: That is a comment, with a request for additional information.

Mr. Green: We are certainly conscious. The trends I am very aware of that have recently been undertaken in a number of provinces relate to evaluation. I would be pleased to recommend some of the activities of some of those provinces to our minister, just as I would not be prepared to recommend some of the activities of some of those provinces to any minister.

Mr. Jackson: We are anxious to hear that. I am serious. We are most anxious to hear those things which you feel are—

Mr. Green: Other developments: sometimes the activities in other provinces relate to the beginnings of activities where we perhaps have moved further along the road than they, I suppose particularly with respect to French-language education.

Mr. Jackson: Early identification. We are national leaders—

Mr. Green: Where we would be moving ahead—that is correct—of the field in that direction.

Mr. Jackson: Mr. Larratt-Smith, in your presentation you talked about the auditing process and value for output. Could you expand on that? I have seen the review of the financial reporting for boards that was initiated by the ministry in 1981-82. What did you mean by value for output? Are you talking about dollars or are you talking about student achievement? Could you expand on that a little bit?

Mr. Larratt-Smith: I was speaking primarily about student achievement. Obviously, if the major role of the ministry is establishing policies and then providing funds and resources, the third step—a step, as I indicated to you, to which we are devoting a lot of attention—is ensuring that those resources are used effectively and that the policies are indeed being followed.

That is obviously a complex task in an environment where, as I mentioned, the school boards are operating with elected boards in a local context. The focus at the moment is very much towards program evaluation and achievement measuring at the provincial level, achievement of the program results that the province has set in an overall sense.

Mr. Jackson: These are not made public?

Mr. Larratt-Smith: Yes, they are made public. The geography review, which was recently released, would be an example. In fact, it is the model the ministry is using in that area.

Mr. Jackson: You also referred to some 15 court cases, which was your reference for us in terms of the impact of the charter on education. Would it be possible for us to get a brief breakdown of the nature of the claims? Some we are familiar with in terms of private schools and others, but I wonder if we could get a very brief paragraph on each—I am interested if the committee is not—in terms of where the charter is servicing with respect to education in Ontario.

Since the charter is far more permanent than the direction of education in this province, perhaps it would be wise for us to examine that element of it. Mostly, we will be waiting for the outcome of the court cases—I understand that—but it certainly will give us a window as to where the public perceives our earliest reforms are required.

Mr. Larratt-Smith: Yes, I will be happy to do that. I should note that determining exact numbers over what period of time is something that will take a little bit of doing. That would also include litigation. It would speak to litigation generally. Although the major area that has generated litigation has indeed been the charter, there have been certain other issues as well. I would be very happy to try to put some of that material together for the committee or for the member.

Mr. Jackson: I will pass in the interest of time. I have several more questions. If there is time—

Madam Chairman: We will come back to them.

Mr. Mahoney: About 10 days ago, I attended a meeting in St. John's, Newfoundland, of legislators from 11 states and eight provinces dealing with educational matters and sharing a lot of information. A number of things came out of that. One concept that I think has been put forward, perhaps not originally at that conference but in other areas, is that all a good education does is prove to a potential employer that you have an ability to learn.

1600

I am curious, with the statement and the aim under item D, where you talk about developing "competence for a suitable occupation," whether that be specific or less specific. The concern at this conference, and one I share, was whether or not we should be moving away from the general type of education and concentrating more on either vocational or specific technical routes in education, as identified by the Premier's Council report.

There is a balancing act there that many of these legislators from the United States and Canada were having some difficulty with. I wonder whether your ministry has examined the need to still maintain a certain amount of general education and yet try to make it more detailed so it is indeed more relevant—relevance being a major part of the Radwanski report. I wonder if you have any comments or thoughts on that balancing act.

Mr. Green: I have three—and the others are equally competent to respond to any of these, as distinct from myself—but my three observations on that would be the following.

The general tenor of the purpose of education in the elementary and secondary schools is running away from that particular thrust of specialized training. It is running in the direction of communication skills, and that means language, numbers, writing and such; problem-solving skills, and that means grappling with unknowns and arriving at knowns; co-operative solution skills—co-operative learning is one of the new modes where everyone thinks down in think-tank stuff—but is less directed towards welding, pipefitting, steamfitting or whatever.

There are two reasons for that, I suspect. First, the technology changes so rapidly that the lead time is very frequently difficult to acquire for the school system.

If I may be permitted an anecdote, we had an opportunity, when I was director in the city of Toronto, to have the most relevant kind of education known to anybody. A major multinational employer came to us and indicated it would be establishing a new town at a particular time. They knew how many electricians, plumbers, steamfitters, machinists and so forth they would require to serve that facility and they wondered whether they could enter into a liaison with us, particularly given four specialized technical schools and a number of other technical facilities, that would establish a coincidence of timing. As they opened this development, the potential employees for that development would come on stream. They were quite prepared to throw in their own training components in the summer, to employ students, for example, in that kind of activity.

We looked at that for a long time and it sounded so neat, yet there was something seductive about it that made us draw back. At about the time we would have been holding the secondary school graduation ceremonies for that particular group of students, the multinational cancelled the whole operation. It never opened the place because the world economy had changed to the point that production of that particular element at that particular location was pointless.

It worries me to be hung too tightly on that, and I would say the major theme runs that way for that reason.

The second reason is that the location of the kind of technology required to provide that kind of training now is ambiguous. In order to provide

it for every secondary school, it becomes prohibitively expensive. We have tended to lean a bit on the community colleges as the locus for those new ones, or very specialized technical schools. More frequently, we are looking at co-operative education in that direction.

The second part of my answer is that I suspect we are trying to address it about as strongly through co-operative education as we are through any other mechanism at the moment. That is still touching a minority of our students, but that does expose them to a marketplace that is more current than the school in terms of up-to-date trends in what is happening with students.

I have forgotten the third part of my answer, so I hope that one of my colleagues can supply it, but I would say we are running against the trends there.

Mr. Keyes: I have a follow-up.

Mr. Mahoney: If there are no other comments, I have a question, very briefly. Mr. Keyes wants to follow up on that.

Mr. Green: There is one other part.

Mr. Mahoney: You remembered it.

Mr. Green: Yes, I have remembered. We have a joint committee with the Ministry of Skills Development and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, under Mr. Larratt-Smith's chairmanship for the last year and a half. They meet fairly regularly, and I suspect this is the major issue that they have been addressing. We really would be hopeful of some shifts in the apprenticeship system that would enable us to make closer linkages between the schools and specific activities as a result of that, and I anticipate that a rather major report will be coming out from the committee that will start pointing us in those directions.

Mr. Mahoney: If Mr. Keyes has a question that relates to that, my other question relates to private schools.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Keyes, would you like to have a supplementary?

Mr. Keyes: It was directly on that, because I was a bit concerned that Mr. Green had not said very much about apprenticeship training. One of my focus areas on this committee is to look at what we are going to do. We have kind of divorced apprenticeship training away from education, community colleges, and put it out by itself as skills development within the government. I saw that as a good move, in a sense, to highlight it; yet I am still somewhat concerned as to whether we are reaching out to meet the need

that shows itself in the apprenticeship training field all the time.

I see it as an area where we must have a really close liaison between government and industry in fulfilling that role, plus organized labour in particular. We do know that many of our skills areas are going begging and we have to import such a large number of our trades people. We want to look at bricklayers, etc. I think the average age of bricklayers in this province is 55 and the average age of electricians is about 52. We are running out, and trying to import these tradespeople from Europe and England.

I just hope we do not overlook in the educational field the joint responsibility of government, industry and labour for this particular aspect on skills training and apprenticeship work. I hope we are going to focus a fair amount on that somewhere in our work and not say that education does not have a role to play in looking towards apprenticeship. I am glad to hear that Mr. Larratt-Smith is the head of that. It is just that we did not talk much about it.

Mr. Green: If I led you to that conclusion, I would not. I think the joint committee that Mr. Larratt-Smith has been chairing does address that one. I would remind the committee, though, that ever since I have been around, we have had a shortage of tool-and-die makers. I think as long as I have been alive, we have had a shortage of tool-and-die makers, because it has always been cheaper to import them than to prepare them. That is the only conclusion I can come to, because those people have been in short supply since at least after the Second World War. I cannot go back to the Depression; I can, but I cannot remember about tool-and-die makers.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: We have not done much to change the system.

Mr. Green: No, we have not. That is quite true.

Mr. Keyes: Would it be fair to ask Mr. Larratt-Smith to make any comment on that, other than to await the report?

Mr. Larratt-Smith: I would be happy to comment. I think it is perhaps too strong to characterize the work that we are doing as a formal report of massive size, but it is basically an attempt to make sure that at the senior working level in those three ministries we are trying to hook all of the pieces together. Obviously, the whole issue of transition, as it concerns this committee, is one that concerns us operationally within those three ministries.

The whole issue of where people go, how they are encouraged early on, not just in secondary school but maybe even in elementary school, to begin to make choices and to have the kinds of educational experiences that will enable them to feed into various useful and fulfilling employment opportunities is really of major concern to us. It is complicated, of course, by the fact that we have in Canada a decentralized manpower system, so there is not, as Mr. Green says, a question of saying where people are going to go in a planned sense.

We have been addressing, among the three ministries, how one makes sure that the Ministry of Education, which is the source of all the kids, certainly up through the compulsory school age, is being sensitive to early experiences which will enable students to go on into other job adjustment situations, one of which obviously is an apprenticeship program, or through the community colleges and the universities.

1610

Mr. Keyes: You have talked about the three ministries. I agree with you, but the other one that always keeps bothering me is the Ministry of Labour, whether or not it has been appropriately involved.

Mr. Larratt-Smith: I cannot say the Ministry of Labour has been a major player in that particular group, but we have also, in the broader sense, been working with the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology, which also have components of the entire package when you look at it.

The major feature of our work among the three ministries, given the decentralized nature of the system, has been looking at the information systems available. After all, if the individual, the student, is the person who has to make the choices and decide what he or she wants to do within his or her range of capability, then the kind of information you provide to that student, when and in what form, through what delivery mechanism, becomes the sort of crucial information system that enables the whole education-and-transition-to-work process to function in a way that both allows that individual choice and is reasonably economically effective.

Mr. Jackson: Just for clarification, is this a subcommittee on the interministerial review of apprenticeship?

Mr. Larratt-Smith: No.

Mr. Jackson: I thought Labour was one of the key ministries when it was first announced by

Sorbara over two years ago that the apprenticeship review was going on.

Mr. Larratt-Smith: The remarks I have been making are with respect to a committee of assistant deputy ministers of the three ministries—the Ministry of Skills Development, the Ministry of Colleges and Universities and the Ministry of Education—which is primarily related to ensuring that the programs of those three ministries fit together. That is a separate initiative.

The ADM responsible for apprenticeship in Skills Development is a member of that committee, and the apprenticeship concerns of that ministry and of our ministry, in terms of the relation of the school system to apprenticeship, are discussed in that committee, but it is not the apprenticeship review.

Mr. Jackson: No. When we first found this out, we realized that Education was not even part of it; it took a year to get Education people involved. That betrays one of the major concerns we have, if because of the heavy-duty federal dollars that are transferred, we see this as a retraining component and a response to shifting national economic agendas versus whether or not we have an educational system which—as the West Germans have; one of the world's best cases—acknowledges that a certain segment of the population will be involved in technical activities and therefore the school system has an obligation to train it. We have to overhaul Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions curriculum guidelines if we are going to move in that direction.

You are not suggesting that is part of the review you are involved in. You are just involved with streamlining. The main review of apprenticeship is being conducted separately and distinctly from your committee.

Mr. Larratt-Smith: That is right.

Mr. Jackson: That is the point I was trying to make, because that is why Labour is not involved with you at this point. Is Education at the table with the apprenticeship review, or are you just the subcommittee of ADMs dealing with streamlining between colleges and universities? That is where the main federal dollars flow, to community colleges and universities. They do not flow to school boards. They come from municipal taxes and provincial revenues. Part of the controversy and problem we have is where we get our bucks, is deciding when we educate the kids.

Mr. Larratt-Smith: When you speak of apprenticeship review, are you speaking specif-

ically of the federal dollars, the federal training money?

Mr. Jackson: I want to clarify the committee Sorbara announced almost two years ago, when he was the Minister of Skills Development, which I understand is still ongoing. There has been no report to either the cabinet or the public at large, but there is a review of apprenticeship of which Education was not a member. We were told you were.

I am just seeking clarification as to whether you are a subcommittee of that operation which is dealing with streamlining the educational process or in fact you are a fully-fledged member of the apprenticeship review, which is what we have requested and which we were under the understanding that you were participating in.

Mr. Larratt-Smith: I would have to check into that because the initiative that we have been discussing here—we are talking about a number of different committees—

Mr. Jackson: Yes.

Mr. Larratt-Smith: The initiative that we are talking about is one of policy liaison among the three ministries. In that context, the initiative with regard to apprenticeship comes through our committee, in part so that the three ministries can be on the same footing when they go forward to cabinet or whatever in terms of initiation. As to the specific relationship of our ministry to this apprenticeship review, I would have to determine who is on that committee and get back to you.

Mr. Jackson: I would appreciate knowing that.

Madam Chairman: If there is no further questioning on this line, I think we will go back to Mr. Mahoney, who had a second question.

Mr. Mahoney: I do not have statistics to prove this, but it seems to me there has been a substantial increase in private schools in Ontario. Certainly in the greater Metropolitan Toronto area and surrounding communities there has been. The word "competition" was used by Mr. Clifford and that was between the separate system and the public system.

I guess, by way of question, do you see the increase in private schools as being a show of lack of confidence in the public and/or separate school system and do you see it healthy that the private school syndrome be part of that competition to perhaps push the publicly funded branches, as you called them?

Mr. Clifford: I do not necessarily see the private schools as being in competition with the

two publicly funded branches. I see them as an alternative which is available to ratepayers for certain reasons, whether they be for special children, whether they be for financial reasons that people can take part in them, etc. I do not see them as being in competition nor do I see them driving changes in the publicly funded system.

Mr. Mahoney: There are examples that I certainly know of that exist where young people have been struggling—either through determined problems, such as learning disabilities, or undetermined problems—and they have been struggling in the public school system. The parents transfer them to a private school and they turn around. I guess that is a function of class size, of having the opportunity to spend more attention, more time with the student.

My concern, if we are going to talk about a relevant publicly funded school system or systems, is whether there is a fear about the proliferation of private schools and the seemingly strong trend towards that—particularly in the world of yuppies, there is a very strong tendency to go to the private school, right from very early school right up through high school.

I am concerned when we deal with the overall concept of relevance—whether we are turning a good enough product out of the publicly funded systems, or are people going to have to get proper education for their children to compete, to go to university, and this all relates to the whole streaming issue—are we forcing people away from publicly funded education systems?

Mr. Clifford: I do not believe that, no. I would relate not to my present assignment but to the days when I was an administrator in a school system. I never saw the private school system as a threat to the public education that we were involved in.

Mr. Jackson: Your tuitions were always lower.

Mr. Clifford: I will not respond to Mr. Jackson.

I can recall parents coming in and saying, "My child has been diagnosed, or they have these feelings about my child, etc., and if you cannot accomplish these things, then I am going to have to place the child in a private school where these things can happen." If that were available to the parent and if that particular source could assist the child, I never saw it as anything else but an alternative.

1620

I still believed in what we were doing in public education. I still believed that under the con-

straints and under the restrictions that public education must bring because of its availability to everyone, we were doing the job. If the person, by financial ability, by desire, by availability, etc., could reduce some of the restrictions that we were forced to work under in public education, or could take the child to a situation in private schools that we had not come up to or could not be as good as, I saw that only as a challenge and as another alternative to help youngsters as they were presented to us.

Mr. Larratt-Smith: I just want to draw attention back to the presentation I made to the committee, in which I did indicate the numbers as of the 1987 statistics. We are all aware of press reports and so on about current growth, but currently, with 61,000 students in private schools as of 1987 and 1.8 million in the public systems, we are operating at a ratio of about 30 to 1. In that sense, it is still a relatively small component of education as it is delivered in Ontario. The base is very much smaller.

Mr. Mahoney: But am I correct that it has been on the increase substantially?

Mr. Larratt-Smith: Yes.

Mr. Jackson: In a period of declining enrolment province-wide in the other two public systems.

Mr. Larratt-Smith: Yes.

Mr. Green: There are a couple of reasons for that, in my mind. One is certainly the question of religious atmosphere in which the child is reared. Much of that growth has taken place in religious schools. I think it certainly is no secret that many of the people who operate those schools feel that the Constitution—if they do not think the charter is discriminatory, they are not so sure that the Constitution and the charter match in that respect and would be curious about whether or not rights that currently are extended to one religious group should not be extended to another. Yes, I think there is a significant population that looks for that.

In terms of the movement from one to the other, I have seen equal examples of students moving from private schools to either of the public systems and thriving. I do not see them as a significant threat. I do see them as a choice alternative, just as the public transit system is an alternative for transportation, yet a significant number of people prefer to drive their own cars for the convenience that it gives them and for the amount of autonomy it gives them.

Madam Chairman: I believe Mr. Jackson has a supplementary on that one.

Mr. Jackson: Mr. Clifford, Mr. Mahoney's question was to do with the concept of threat and transfers and you made reference to your experience when you were a director of a separate board, but in those days that you were referring to, you had a public system and a private system or what the public perceived as a private system.

In those days, I remember as a trustee we always looked at the numbers of public school students who were transferring to the separate system. Generally, there was accommodation of those students at the elementary panel, but limited accommodation at the secondary. There were financial reasons as well for that, but that was a general statement. Yet today we are seeing a whole different set of perceptions and transfers, are we not?

Are we not seeing the concept finally coming to the fore of two public systems and are we now seeing the public system, which traditionally in an ongoing way must accept all children and the separate system, which was accepting students where it was possible, now making comments that it chooses not to accept students from the other system; in other words, deals with it in a private-school-type fashion? Is there not a clear difference between what was going on 10 and 15 years ago in Ontario in terms of competition with alternative systems and what is now emerging today, and are we monitoring that?

Mr. Clifford: There is a total difference in the situation that you describe. There is a total difference if we are talking private schools as they once applied, for example, in the religious community of the Roman Catholic system, in regard to which there is no question. In your experience as a public school trustee you would know that there was the opportunity to say, "Yes, we can take these youngsters." There was also the opportunity to say, "We won't keep these youngsters." That is no longer true with open access, etc., to go back.

In response to the question about personal experience at the private schools, I was not addressing that particular type of school. I was addressing the parent who, after a great deal of soul searching, after a great deal of anguish, etc., came about a youngster who was having a learning difficulty, for example, and then I would be able to explain what we, as a publicly funded school system, could do. I think there are more parents today who can say to you at the end of your pitch for public education and what we are doing, "Thank you, but I have now the means to investigate at least private school education for

my youngster." If that is possible and if there is a better way for that youngster, I do not have any hangup on that.

Mr. Keyes: Is that not one of the other reasons for growth in schools? I hate to use the term, but many people who want to seek out a special situation for some of their children have more available disposable income. Is that not a factor in the increased growth?

Mr. Clifford: It is the one I am speaking to.

Mr. Jackson: On that point, it is for the reasons of a child with a learning disability or a child who is having difficulty with basic learning. We have several. The Pine School in the Halton region, for example, is specifically designed; nondenominational, nondisciplinarian, none of these is a consideration. It is that, in the opinion of the parents, the school system and maybe external examinations are unable to meet that student's needs in a ratio of 20 to 1 or limited access to special education in a ratio of 7 or 3 or 4 to 1.

Yes, in that case, you are absolutely right, but that does not represent the lion's share of private school attendees in this province. Otherwise, if there is such a dramatic increase for reasons of learning disabilities, then would that not indicate a major indictment of the public system, separate or public, that we have such growth for those reasons?

That gets closer to Mr. Mahoney's question, I thought, which is: Where is the competition? Is it in terms of discipline? Is it in terms of the failings of the school system to meet that child's educational needs and the parent says, "I am withdrawing them," and then takes them somewhere else? Then money is an issue. If it is for religious or disciplinarian reasons, it is very clear that the church-sponsored religious schools have varying approaches to congregational community-based support to ensure that they get their educational needs met.

I thought that was the general area in which Mr. Mahoney was raising the question and you were rather specific with educational needs, which in my view is an admission that at least in the parents' mind the system has failed their child. I am sorry to be so specific, Mr. Clifford.

Mr. Clifford: Not at all. I want to phrase this properly. In the private school system that was grades 11, 12 and 13 of the separate school system, for example, we used to have calls which would come from a parent who said, "I am non-Catholic, but I want to send my daughter to St. Marys." I would ask why and the parent would say, "Because you have better discipline."

I said, "If that is true, I am happy, but I have to be sure that it is true because I have to know what you mean by discipline. If it is a discipline which is addressed to a particular problem your daughter is having, I am not sure that we can be a one-stop service." That is the kind of thing that I was addressing back the other way.

I do not think that the competition, as I spoke about it earlier, means a threat. I think it is a perception of people, the availability to people of more schools and the financial ability of more people to see them as an alternative.

Mr. Mahoney: On the issue of the private school, if I might, and not to beat this thing to death, a learning disabled child is one thing, and there are ways of dealing with that in either of the two existing systems. The discipline problem child is another thing. Again, I guess you can say that perhaps the discipline is more appropriately meted out at home rather than at school.

The question that I think Cam was trying to sort of fine-tune that I wanted to hear your reactions to is a student who is not defined as having a learning disability, not defined as having a discipline problem, but is simply failing in the system or the system is failing the child, one or the other, and the parent, whether he can afford it or not, makes a decision to switch over to a private school. We see numerous examples of that student then flourishing and going on. I guess my question is, is that a condemnation of the public school system in your minds? Is it a problem? Notwithstanding the 30-to-1 ratio that exists today, are we going to see that ratio go down to 20 to 1 or to 10 to 1, or is there a real threat there? If so, what are we doing about it?

1630

Mr. Keyes: Does the answer not have to come in part by analysing, first of all, where the growth is occurring in private schools? Is it for children who are failing, who have learning disabilities, or is it not? Or are some of them in the artistic side of things, where they get a heavier concentration in the arts than perhaps some other fields?

Madam Chairman: Or it may simply be that a lot of parents would like their children to have a lower pupil-teacher ratio, that there is no disciplinary problem per se or there is no learning disability, but they feel that their child would thrive in having a little more attention, and they are willing to pay that price. It might be that there are large numbers in that category as well, which does not necessarily mean it is an indictment of the public education system. It is a matter of what the public education system is capable of

achieving with the limited dollars we can put into it.

Mr. Jackson: Perhaps, Madam Chairman, when Dr. Shapiro is before us, we can ask him the question I have been dying to ask him. For the first time in Ontario's history we have a deputy minister who is responsible for releasing his own report, written when he was not a deputy minister, and perhaps he might inform us as to when he will have permission or feels it prudent to do so because I think the answers to some of the questions being raised now in terms of private schools will be dealt with in it. Certainly on a more serious note for this committee and its activities, we clearly should not be putting that on our spring agenda if, in fact, the government is not willing to release the report. I would hope that we would somehow be able to co-ordinate that as a committee and an inquiry on the whole general area of private schools.

Madam Chairman: The deputy minister, Bernard Shapiro, will be appearing before the committee on the afternoon of Thursday, July 28, so I guess we will wait with bated breath until his appearance, and at that time, you can address that question specifically to him.

Unless any other members have supplementaries, I think we will continue the questioning. Mr. Keyes, at one stage you were on my speaking list and got in there for a number of supplementaries. I am not sure you have actually asked your question yet.

Mr. Keyes: No, I have not.

Madam Chairman: Please go ahead.

Mr. Keyes: It is partially a comment, but I would like comments from some members of the panel. When you did your review, Duncan—again, we all appreciate that—and looked at Japan, Japan is cited as an area where high technology has been the thrust of their educational system. We have the Premier's Council saying we must put much more emphasis on high technology and that we are away behind the system at the moment. We have talked about Japan as an area where they highlight creativity in thinking.

Yet what the challenge to us in Ontario will certainly have to be is not to have a system, as I assess the Japanese system to be, where the young people are driven even to suicide. I think they have the highest suicide rate of teenagers anywhere in the world in the school system. I viewed it slightly for a period of time. It is a system where I understand only one in 10 of the students can really get into higher education, and

therefore, they are driven to phenomenal depths to try to make that 1-in-10 slot.

We must devise a system where we are not going to put that type of stress on our young people because we have tried to say that post-secondary schooling is going to be there for everyone and we never have had quotas in a sense. Some of them are only in a minor way.

Would you agree with those kinds of stats that I have observed: the stress factor there; the lack of opportunity—one in 10 I believe is correct; the highest suicide rate in any teenaged school population anywhere in the world?

Mr. Green: I think that is their major concern in their review now. They find it too tight a system. My reason for adducing it was to emphasize that, depending on where we are on this pendulum of societal needs versus individual nurturing, we will react to the extremes when we get there, and the Japanese are at the other extreme to ours, I would propose, where the system is pretty well harnessed to the tradition and to the state.

One other comment about that was interesting in this Pacific Encounters yesterday. They were interviewing a Japanese university professor who had sent his son to a private school, and he had sent his son to a private school because the private school allows more freedom of action and less discipline than the public system accords him, and he is hoping that for a period of time at any rate that youngster will be able not to conform to the degree that the pressures of that school system ask him to perform. He didn't even hope that the kid would not have to conform throughout his lifetime, he said that is not the Japanese cultural pattern, but during that period of childhood he wanted a more emancipated experience for his child than the system was providing, which is the other side of the coin that we talk about. I would doubt that we would be in any hazard of going too far in the other direction.

Paradoxically too, I just was the recipient of a report from a Commonwealth Fellow who spent a year in this country, a British superintendent who spent a year in this country on a Commonwealth fellowship, looking at our educational system. I started to glance through it, the way you do with reports, saying, "Do I really have to read this?" I hit a page and a sentence really leaped out at me. He said that if he had to pick one characteristic of Canadian schools that impressed him most, it would be the discipline in the schools. I will be glad to provide the comments to the members of the committee.

Mr. Jackson: I know the school he was at. I was there too.

Mr. Green: He was at schools here and in Alberta, for the most part.

Mr. Jackson: How long ago was this?

Mr. Green: This was two years ago. I do not think we have changed all that much in two years.

The other thing—and then to private schools—do not forget the importance of both religious and cultural heritages as they presently apply to those. A public system, indeed either of our public systems, has some difficulty in responding to the specifics that a population wants incorporated in its curriculum to the extent that it wants it incorporated.

I speak here particularly of the Jewish schools, for example, which have grown tremendously in the last little while, of the Christian schools that have grown in that fashion and of the Muslim school in Mississauga, where you are getting individualized groups looking for retention of a cultural tradition to an extent that a publicly funded system finds very hard to assent to.

Mr. Keyes: That is also why I suggest we need to do an analysis of where that growth is in the private schools.

Mr. Green: Yes, I think that is very—

Mr. Keyes: I think we should really look at that before we get alarmed as to their competing against our system.

Madam Chairman: Mrs. O'Neill, if you have not forgotten your question by now, I think you are the last one I have on the speaking list.

Mrs. O'Neill: I have a very short question and then I have some comments, if I may. Mark, you have one act here that I have never heard of before, the School Trust Conveyances Act. What is that all about?

Mr. Larratt-Smith: I was afraid someone was going to ask me that. To be honest, I had not heard about it until very recently, so I will have to take that as notice.

Mrs. O'Neill: It is obviously one we do not use very often, then.

Mr. Larratt-Smith: I did receive a briefing note from our legal staff on that act. I will read you the briefing note. All it says is that it is for conveyances. It does not add anything whatever to the title; it really restates it in other terms. I will have to get you that information.

Mrs. O'Neill: OK.

Mr. Larratt-Smith: It has to do with movement of property.

Mrs. O'Neill: I thought it would have something to do with facilities.

Mr. Reycraft: It is the responsibility of the parliamentary assistant.

Mrs. O'Neill: It must be.

I found your walk-through very interesting, Mr. Green. I had not been—even to look at the way the Hope commission published and the look of those pages.

Mr. Green: It is a little different—

Mrs. O'Neill: It seems like less than 40 years ago.

Interjection: The style was slightly different.

Mrs. O'Neill: The other document that we know is *Living and Learning*.

I have to say that I would have liked a little longer presentation from Mariette and from Frank. The reason I say that is that lately I have been talking to francophones and visiting francophone environments more than I have in a long time. I guess what I am finally getting an appreciation of, and I feel I have been very long in gaining this, is that the needs of the francophone students in this province are not the same as the needs of the anglophone students. I guess I would have liked to have heard you verbalize that.

You did very briefly talk about compulsories and how that was changing. I think that is a lesson that is going to take a long time for those of us who are outside of the francophone community to understand.

1640

As to the goals and philosophy of education, the francophone, as I understand it now, having spent just one day in Prescott-Russell last Friday, is much more closely tied to group orientation, cultural orientation and historical roots than we seem to have in the anglophone. Maybe that is just the comment that Mr. Green was making. Maybe that has to do with the multiculturalism that we have in the anglophone separate and public schools or publicly funded schools.

Mr. Clifford knows what I would have liked him to have said, I think, but just for the record, I think I would have liked to have heard, rather than just those events that have taken place more recently in the development of separate schools, why the separate schools survived when times were not quite as exciting or challenging as they are now and why the goals are somewhat and, in fact, quite distinctly different from the family goals of the other publicly funded system.

I am sure those things will come out as we hear from the various groups, but as a preamble to

your presentation today, of course, I ask the impossible often and maybe I did ask it today as well. I appreciate what you have said and I certainly think the walk-through was very helpful to let us know the struggles that are still there. I think most of the struggles are still there just in the implementation stages. People ask me, "Is a certain situation settled?" and I say: "No, I do not think it is settled at all. I think we are just beginning." I think we have a lot of new responsibilities, as those of us know who are putting in Bill 105, as you like to call it. I thought that was kind of an interesting incident across this province.

Thank you for the overview. I will be hopeful that we will hear more about the differences of those two elements of our publicly funded education system. If you have any really good statements, because you are in this field, that you feel would be helpful to the committee about the philosophy of those schools, apart from what we will hear from the others, I would certainly appreciate the overview that you have from sharpening your sights. Really good, solid statements on the philosophy would be helpful.

Madam Chairman: Any comment on that one, Mrs. Carrier-Fraser?

Mrs. Carrier-Fraser: Just probably a few.

As a matter of fact, I think French-language education is just coming of age in the province. Even within the Ministry of Education right now, we are looking at better ways of delivering services to the French-language community; a better way of ensuring that the programs that we develop within the ministry better address the needs of French-language students in the province.

When this committee is looking at the whole system and when it is looking also at the choices that the French-language community or French-language pupils have to make, you will have to remember that the choices are much more limited than they are for the English-language population of this province.

If you are dealing with post-secondary education, first of all in the universities, the choices for the French-language community within this province are extremely limited as far as programs at the university level are concerned. If you look at colleges, they are just as limited. Our program in co-operative education, for instance, is accessible to pupils, but within a French-language setting it is almost nonexistent.

What I have given you basically is a historical background to your discussions, but very little

philosophical insight into what the French-language community is all about.

Just dealing with the multicultural dimension, within the English-language schools in this province we have dealt with multicultural education, whether adequately or not, over the years. In French-language education, it is just becoming a reality. It is a dimension that will have to be addressed over the next few years as various racial and ethnic groups enter the French-language schools and are not very welcome, if you want, because the French-language community has been trying to live within its own community over a large number of years just to survive. This has been a case of survival over the years, and now it is accepting other groups because they have chosen to live within the French-language community. That is another dimension that needs to be addressed.

I have dealt mostly with governance and very little with actual goings-on within the schools themselves. That would have taken more than 10 minutes.

Mr. Clifford: If I might respond with three observations, first, I am delighted that in an appearance before a select committee there were not the number of questions I might have anticipated about Bill 30.

Mr. Jackson: Incidentally, for the record, I did defer the balance of my questions if time permitted, but I did avoid my Bill 30 question.

Mr. Clifford: I understand that, as you and I have avoided them over the years. If I might just complete, it is a highlight of my day that we would be discussing at the committee level such as this the philosophy of the various school systems that we are talking about, whether they be private, public or separate. I think we are beyond the mechanics, and we are talking about that. I am very delighted about that.

The second thing is that some of the more youthful members of this committee will be available if you would like us to return, and I would be happy to discuss that situation with you.

Madam Chairman: Any closing comments, Mr. Green?

Mr. Green: I was going to retaliate, but it is too easy.

Mr. Keyes: I still started teaching before any of you.

Madam Chairman: Any closing comments from our four presenters from the ministry?

Mr. Green: Just to thank you, Madam Chairman. We too felt the constraint of a

presentation in trying to cover the history and the future and such. I repeat our offer of the provision of material to the committee as it requests it.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Green, Mr. Larratt-Smith, Mrs. Carrier-Fraser and Mr. Clifford. We appreciate the time you have spent today. I think you did an exceptional job of trying to compact and overview the history and everything else in less than three hours. You are to be commended.

Just before we go for the day, I do have a few announcements. The first is a correction of a type. I mentioned that Bernard Shapiro and Chris Ward would be coming on Thursday, July 28. That is indeed true. What I forgot to mention was they would also be here in the morning. Starting at 10 o'clock that morning, we will have the minister and the deputy minister. We will continue at two o'clock, so there will be quite a bit of opportunity to question them.

Second, committee members at an earlier stage had asked if we could get a copy of the Radwanski responses from various individuals to the ministry. As you know, there was a deadline of June 30 for those responses. Bernard Shapiro has sent a letter to everyone who sent a response to the ministry asking for permission to forward the responses to our select committee. He has given a deadline of July 22, by which time if they have not heard from the respondents, they will assume that it is permissible to let us have copies of the submissions. Hopefully by the time September comes, we will have all that information and be able to review it before our September hearings.

Third, briefly, there will be a subcommittee meeting on Thursday at noon. Mr. Jackson, Mr. Reycraft and myself are here, but I notice Mr. Johnston is not, so we will make sure Mr. Johnston is alerted to that.

On the agenda for tomorrow, we are starting out at 10 o'clock with a presentation from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, most affectionately known as OISE, followed by the Retail Council of Canada and the Ontario Public School Trustees' Association. In the afternoon, we have the Ontario Association of Education Administration Officials, the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, finished off by the Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association. That will be Tuesday, July 19.

I would like to thank our viewers for joining us today. This afternoon's session will be telecast again tonight. I hope you will join us tomorrow. Meeting adjourned.

Mr. Jackson: If you are not going to permit my other questions, one of them was a request of additional information. I would like at least to put that on the record.

Madam Chairman: Certainly.

Mr. Jackson: Since Mr. Green alluded to socially defined agendas in education—they sometimes refer to those as political agendas—I would most anxiously like to review all or any interministerial committees which the Ministry of Education is currently participating in, which would be an indication of where some of the political agendas for education are in this province.

There is the one that has been referred to by Mr. Keyes's question. Also, you are familiar with the recently struck one on sexual assault, which the Ministry of Education has been invited to. I would, and I am sure other members of the committee might, benefit from a document which would include when the Ministry of Education was invited on any interministerial task force, committee or activity and what its stated objectives or understood mandate was. If I could have that information, it would assist me to help build some of the questions I have with respect to the government's agenda for education, which may or may not be public.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Green, do you anticipate any difficulties with that?

Mr. Green: I do not think so, Madam Chairman. I am assuming that would include any committees that were initiated out of the Ministry of Education as well.

Madam Chairman: Would any other members have suggestions for information they would like from the ministry at this time?

Mrs. O'Neill: I would like some information from you about this committee and who may appear before it. I am getting questions in my constituency office from varying groups. What are the criteria, if there are any, for a group to appear?

Madam Chairman: Are you referring to the September hearings?

Mrs. O'Neill: Yes, I am. These were by invitation, but are the others first come, first served?

Madam Chairman: That is correct.

Mrs. O'Neill: Do they have to have some broad membership? How directly attached to education do they have to be?

Madam Chairman: It has certainly been a case of first come, first served. The clerk is

making a list, and as of the deadline, which is July 22, she will then start notifying people of the date they can schedule. We do have at this time in certain areas more people who have requested participation that we have time, so we are trying to work around that. In certain other areas, we may not have sufficient people to warrant the committee's travelling to that area, but as I mentioned, the deadline is July 22.

There have been no criteria for group size or mandate. We have individuals, boards and students. We have all sorts of people on the list.

Mrs. O'Neill: Thank you very much.

Mr. Jackson: It would not hurt to make that concern known to your subcommittee rep, since

we can discuss it on Thursday, if that is more helpful to you.

Mrs. O'Neill: If we are going to have to have extended hours or things like that, it would be helpful for us to know that sooner rather than later.

Madam Chairman: That is right. That is why we are hoping by this Friday, when the committee deadline is reached, to be able to determine whether we will actually have to sit extended hours or perhaps cancel a trip to an area where there is not sufficient demand for participation.

The committee adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

CONTENTS

Monday, July 18, 1988

Philosophy and Goals of Education	E-71
Ministry of Education	E-71
Adjournment	E-101

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Chairman: Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)

Vice-Chairman: Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)

Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)

Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)

Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)

Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)

Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)

Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)

O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)

Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)

Clerk: Mellor, Lynn

Staff: Gardner, Dr. Robert J. L., Assistant Chief, Legislative Research Service

Porter, Ann, Research Officer, Legislative Research Service

Witnesses:

From the Ministry of Education:

Green, Duncan, Assistant Deputy Minister, Learning Programs Division

Larratt-Smith, Mark, Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Planning and Policy Division

Carrier-Fraser, Mariette, Assistant Deputy Minister, Franco-Ontarian Education

Clifford, J. Frank, Executive Director, Bill 30 Implementation Unit





No. E-5

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Select Committee on Education

Philosophy and Goals of Education



First Session, 34th Parliament

Tuesday, July 19, 1988

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario
Editor of Debates: Peter Brannan

CONTENTS

Contents of the proceedings reported in this issue of Hansard appears at the back, together with a list of the members of the committee and other members and witnesses taking part.

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues can be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at (416) 965-2159.

Hansard subscription price is \$16.00 per session, from: Sessional Subscription Service, Information Services Branch, Ministry of Government Services, 5th Floor, 880 Bay Street, Toronto, M7A 1N8. Phone (416) 965-2238.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Tuesday, July 19, 1988

The committee met at 10:03 a.m. in room 151.

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS OF EDUCATION (continued)

Madam Chairman: I recognize a quorum, so we will start this morning's session of the select committee on education. We are pursuing our review of education goals in Ontario and the fundamental philosophy and goals as they relate to the equal life chances and full development of each student. This morning we have on the agenda, starting off, Walter Pitman from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, followed at 10:45 by the Retail Council of Canada and followed at 11:30 by the Ontario Public School Trustees' Association.

Mr. Pitman, if you would like to come forward, please have a seat and welcome to the committee.

Mr. Pitman: Thank you very much.

Madam Chairman: We are very much looking forward to hearing your wisdom this morning. We would recommend perhaps that half of your allotted 45 minutes be for your presentation, allowing sufficient time for questions by the members of the committee. Please proceed whenever you are ready.

WALTER G. PITMAN

Mr. Pitman: I will not be so presumptuous as to suggest I have any wisdom for you this morning. However, I do come to you not as a spokesman for the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education—there are too many of us to have one view on any particular item in education—I come to you as an Ontario citizen who has really had the opportunity of teaching at the elementary level, in a secondary school, at a university, in a polytechnic and now in a graduate school; so I think I have had an unusual opportunity to experience this province's contribution to educational development in a way that has been offered to few people.

I am not going to read you my submission. You have that before you. I guess my first message is one of, as I say, gratuitous advice. I cannot think of a more important subject for any committee of this Legislature to be addressing than the education of the children and youth of

this province. You are indeed meeting at a propitious moment in the history of this province.

I think there is a willingness and a desire for change and development, for addressing the needs of the 21st century as opposed to the 19th century. It seems to me this committee could bring forward a report which could perhaps provide a light for educational departments and ministries right across the country and even make an impact internationally. I congratulate each one of you who is a member of this committee. I for one will watch your proceedings with great interest.

As I said, I must begin with a certain amount of gratuitous advice because I think this committee, like most citizens in Ontario, has been bombarded over the last two or three years with a great deal of information about education, and I am not sure all of it has been terribly helpful. One of the great problems of education is that we are all experts on education. After all, we all spent maybe 12, 13 or as many as 18 years in the hands of the education system of our province. However, this sometimes does not provide us with wisdom, as the chair mentioned a moment ago, but perhaps it provides us with nostalgia. Sometimes we think, would it not be nice if we could go back to those classrooms that we ourselves inhabited when things seemed to be much easier, much simpler, so much less complex?

I suggest that you as committee members might do well simply to visit some of the classes, for example in this very city in which you sit, and see the contrast in the kinds of classes and the kinds of expectations that we have of children and the enormous problems teachers face as they meet those classes day by day. I doubt in the class we sat in two thirds of its students had one parent. I doubt the class we sat in had maybe 50 to 60 per cent of those children without English as a first language. I doubt we have to deal day by day with problems of child violence and incest, the kinds of problems that teachers today have to cope with and find themselves daily overwhelmed by.

I think it is often very easy to think that we can restore, return to what we ourselves experienced. But I can assure you that unless we wish to

reverse the immigration of the last 25 years, unless we wish to forget about all the social problems which have surfaced and are now being addressed by social agencies as well as by educators, that simply is not on the agenda. For that reason, I think some of the simplistic notions that have been proposed as the solution to our problems, sometimes by well-meaning newspaper editors or columnists, or even committees and commissions, have to be very carefully regarded.

In my comments, I suggest two or three areas that I hope you as legislators look at very carefully. Some of these suggestions have come from the Radwanski report, which has become something of a subject of great interest in our schools. Some have come from the report of the Premier's Council, Competing in the New Global Economy. I suggest in two or three areas that one needs really to look very carefully at the solutions that have been put forward.

1010

For example, I suggest that maybe the elementary and secondary schools are not the place where you really solve the problem of competing in the new global economy and that there are areas in the post-secondary area which need far more attention than those in the elementary and secondary.

As well, I suggest that returning to provincial examinations, objective examinations, may not be the best way to raise standards in the much more sophisticated education milieu that we have today in Ontario; nor is it, I think, the way to encourage and deal with the individual needs of students in the system we have today.

Nor do I think a centralized curriculum is necessarily the way you are going to get the most imaginative and exciting teachers in your classroom and the best educational milieu. I have suggested that there are a number of concerns I have about the idea that we should simply drop what has now become kind of a four-letter word—"streaming." Heaven only knows we have not streamed with all of the imagination and creativity we should have; but grouping of young people according to their enthusiasms and according to their abilities is not the worst thing we can do for them, at least until we are prepared to provide individual instruction based on the particular needs of every young person and the particular place every young person happens to be.

As well, there is the whole question of the drop-out. I think one needs to take a look at what is a drop-out. It has always been with us and all of

us are drop-outs as well at some point in time. I happened to drop out before I got a PhD. For that reason, I am sure my colleagues at OISE regard me as a particularly terrible example of a drop-out. Maybe some of you dropped out at some point before you finally came to the point where you realized you needed more education.

The point is that we desperately need a development of a community which can deal with drop-ins and drop-outs. Devolving upon the school some kind of magic whereby it can keep every young person excitingly educated to the age of 18, 20 or 22 is, I think, perhaps an expectation which is beyond any educational system.

I think my first comments may seem to be almost supporting a status quo, and I would not want you to think that, but I realize that today you are dealing with goals and objectives. Before you end your activities, I think you will want to take a look at the revision of curriculum, which I think is tyrannized by the disciplines of the 19th century and which fails to communicate a holistic vision of the future and the needs of that future, a future which means that young people will have to solve the problem of environmental deterioration, will have to solve the enormous power of the nuclear threat, will have to solve inequality around the world, in both the northern and southern hemispheres but also equality of gender within our own city and across our nation. I think curriculum revision certainly is one area that needs your attention.

Second, I think you will realize that a major shift will have to be taken in the preparation and nurturing of teachers throughout a career, as opposed to a one-shot, hot-shot effort for one year after graduation and then virtually thrown to the wolves for the next 30 or 35 years in the classroom.

Third, I think we need a total commitment in this province to continuing education. We have made that intellectually, but we have never really addressed the question of how continuing education has bureaucratically and in the funding sense become a part of our society and the development of the community and education as well.

You will find in this brief several areas that do try to suggest some goals that this committee should be looking at. On page 7, you will find seven or eight suggestions. I say "suggestions" because over the last year or year and a half, since the Premier (Mr. Peterson) announced that he regarded education and excellence in education a major preoccupation of this government, we have had a group of people meeting at OISE

looking at the statements that have been made by the Premier, by the Ministers of Education and by members of the Legislature.

We have been monitoring and trying to find out the directions which both the government and the opposition parties have come upon as the areas of their interest. We have, as a result, developed one or two procedures to try to evolve our own sense of what those goals might be. These are just simply examples of where we are at the moment. More important, we have developed a process in which we would like to engage the chair and each member of the committee. That is really the last item in this brief.

It is to ask you if you might not like to set aside a couple of days to meet with a group of people, not just people from OISE but people from outside in the community. I might, for example, tell you that at the last meeting of this group we listened to a tape from a man who was 38 years old who had been in jail most of his life, who had learned to read at the age of 34. It was very interesting what he thought the goals of education should be. We listened to a tape of a 15-year-old woman in a school, and it was very interesting what she thought the goals of education should be.

What you have before you on pages 7 and 8 are some of those goals that have come out of these discussions, listening to tapes, listening to people who are from the community, who have been involved in education in some cases and who have not been involved in education in many other cases. The nine goals that you see there are what those people came up with.

Madam Chairman: If I could interrupt for one moment, we do have a television audience that does not have the benefit of the written brief that you have provided us. I wonder if you would mind just briefly going over those nine goals.

Mr. Pitman: All right. I would be very glad to.

We wanted to find out what the image of an educated person was in 1988. What is it we think an educated person is? These are things that we came up with.

1. A person who is "curious, filled with the desire to know and to understand, to make the world intelligible." It is a strange, complex and difficult world to understand, but that surely is one of the roles of the schooling system.

2. That he be "reflective, able to examine his/her behaviour and to learn from that reflection.

3. "Able to acquire new knowledge, skills and attitudes"—literacy, of course, becomes a major preoccupation under this one—"and to have a well-balanced set of interests and pursuits in relation to various life contexts and modes of understanding.

4. "Engaged as an involved person in applying their knowledge, skills and attitudes to real life problems." A few moments ago, I mentioned the megaproblems of the environment, nuclear war and inequality, for day by day we have to face personal problems, community problems and neighbourhood problems. We think an educated person is one who not only has information and sits as an isolated person in his garden for the next 40 or 50 years but one who is prepared to use that information in a way that will contribute to a better world.

5. "Prepared to accept and welcome change as a constant and be willing to take risks." In Canada, perhaps taking risks is not something we have been very good at. Over the last year, I have had a chance to spend a great deal of time in an independent school, Hillfield-Strathallen. One of the objectives of that school is to get young people able to take risks and to deal with the fallout of those risks when it does not come out right. That takes a lot of courage for educators, because parents and children think that marks on examinations are the only things they can really judge their performance by. That is not really what education is about.

"6. Capable of striking an appropriate balance between autonomy and inner-directedness." In other words, being able to be one's own person and, on the other hand, be responsive to one's social context and able to look out into that society and see the world around one and be able to balance.

"7. Respectful of the integrity and dignity of others, being able to listen and appreciate differing views." This may be differing views of different racial groups, certainly different people who have varied concepts that one meets day by day, but being able to listen and to appreciate all the richness and variety is something an educated person surely must be able to do.

1020

"8. Informed and have a richness of understanding which would enable the individual to see current events in the context of the past and the possible future." Our television sets bring us the news minute by minute. The difficulty is to see those daily events in such a way that they are understood as having come from some kind of

historical development and that they present a platform on which we have to address the future.

"9. Concerned about spiritual questions such as who are we and why are we here and have one's own tentative, evolving position in relation to these questions."

This is the view that life is not just of the mind and of the emotions, that it is also of the spirit and that an educated person is one who may not seem very religious, may not attend church service or a mass or visit the synagogue very often, but at least he has some perception of those values and concepts that through history have motivated people to do things that have made our civilization possible.

These are not definitions; these are just simply an evolving process, as I say, and that is why we really do invite you to join us in this process. Let us make your agenda our agenda in this discussion and allow us in some way to help you to think quietly. I realize all the pressures you are under day by day, looking after your constituencies, looking after all the problems of your party and your caucus, looking after the problems of the Legislature. I have some small concept of what you face, but none the less, I take this opportunity to invite you to involve yourselves at least for a few hours in this process.

Madam Chairman: As you know, I have two children in the elementary school system and I can tell you that if they come out of it with those nine qualities you have listed, I will be more than happy.

Mr. Jackson: Now that you chair the committee, you will have an opportunity to do something about it.

Madam Chairman: I would never impose my will on others, but maybe we have some questions from our members.

Mrs. O'Neill: You challenged us, and I have heard you challenge before in the area of continuing education. This is an area that I agree with you has not been fully explored. It is also a risky area for governments with limited resources to get involved in because it seems to be very open-ended. It also seems to be interpreted in one part of the community as one thing and in another part of the community as another.

I wonder if you could give us a bit more of an outline of what your expectations are. I think this will be brought forward by many other groups besides yourself. I think that we as a committee are going to have to make some very concrete recommendations. As you know, we have two outstanding reports on this subject in the Ministry of Education right now. They are great chal-

lenges and the problem has to be wrestled with. I would like you to expound a little more on what you think is possible.

Mr. Pitman: I would like to think we could actually save costs if we really looked to the community as a part of the educational system, apart from simply sending us children. In my brief, I do make a passing reference to the view that we should be engaging families as opposed to just simply children.

I am a little concerned about the idea, for example, in the Radwanski report, that suggests we should be bringing children into the educational system virtually at the age of three. I fully understand the need for day care and I fully understand the need for various ways of looking after children during the day when their parents are at work. However, to simply extend the educational system down to age three is perhaps not the way to do it. To some extent this ties into continuing education because I think we have to begin to see the family as an educational device, as an educational mechanism.

It would cost us far less than keeping the three-year-old in school for one day to provide a family with books and periodicals, to provide that family with advice and assistance in watching television and using TVOntario, to provide tickets to plays and to musical events, to send them to the zoo, to museums and to art galleries.

In other words, there is around us an absolute explosion of education and artistic activity going on, and yet we do not really make an effort to develop a family's concern and to educate the family as parents and as citizens, as people involved in that community. That is what I mean by continuing education on one end.

As people who are going to change careers several times, we in this country have put very little of our attention and our resources into such things as paid education leave, for example. We have not really encouraged either the trade union movement or the corporate sector to get really excited about what happens when people are given a chance to come back to various kinds of schooling, to develop their own potential for individual learning as workers. That is something, I think, that needs to happen if we are going to be able to keep our economy effective.

In fact, I think the Canadian Advanced Technology Association put it that in Japan the average worker receives 200 hours of education or training. In Canada, the comparable amount of time is two hours.

When we start blaming the elementary and secondary schools and using international tests as a way to try to assign this blame, I think we should take a look at what is going on in other sectors. It seems to me the corporate sector has to be engaged in education in a way that we in Canada have not done so far.

I think we need to engage people. Perhaps one way would be to develop neighbourhood centres out in the community, because I think probably for many people the university and even the college are a source of some threat. I think that probably very small amounts of money in developing neighbourhood educational opportunities and assigning people to those areas where that learning can take place would benefit us greatly. It would not take a great deal of money, but it would engage a very large number of people in realizing that education is a lifelong endeavour and that it is just too dangerous to have people walking the streets, as Ted Corbett would say, who are not being educated in the 21st century.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. Mrs. O'Neill, would you have any other questions?

Mrs. O'Neill: No. I found the answer very interesting.

Mr. Mahoney: I did as well because my question was one that I thought might have led into the area of family education.

I wonder, looking at these nine items—and as our chairman has said, any one of us would be delighted to have our children come out with even half of these from an education system—are we looking at too much, though, particularly for elementary and secondary school levels, when we talk about the overall educational program you have outlined here? Should we be functioning more on some real basics, some skills, teaching people how to learn, how to study, how to absorb things, rather than trying to develop this bionic student who would appear to be perfect in every way?

Mr. Pitman: I doubt whether even that would be perfection because we do live in a very difficult world; but you are quite right, I think we should certainly be putting our attention on skills and doing that in an individual way.

The problem I worry about when you talk about a central core of basics is that I am not quite sure what you mean by basics. At certain ages, for example for a very young person I think physical education is basic; that is, they do not know about their own bodies and how to retain health and have a respect for their own bodies. Our health care system is not going to work in the

next number of years, at the cost of that health care system.

Second, I think the arts are basic. I cannot imagine how a young person could live a fulfilled life today without some idea about music, drama and visual arts and understanding the emotional impact of those upon that individual.

I think the point you made that the school should not be seen as the place where everything is going to happen is absolutely right, but that does mean then that we have to see our community as having an educational activity and a response. For example, if we are prepared to allow the television network, our people's network, CBC, no longer to be educational, which is what the new bill which is going through Parliament right now suggests, that it is no longer going to be concerned with enlightenment in education but is going to be concerned with information and entertainment, then that is an example of how we, once again, undermine one of the major methods by which people can learn, if that becomes law.

1030

We had a report—I guess it was Doug Wright's report of 20 years ago—that talked about our living in a learning society. Indeed, it is a learning society, but people are learning at very different levels. We have not really made that society available and accessible, especially to people who did not learn at the beginning. The irony of education is that those who have it get more and those who do not have it get less. Probably there is no other area in our society where that is so true. That is what you have to turn around if you are not going to have, once again, young people going through the schools who are coming out of families who have not seen the importance and the cruciality, really, of learning in this age.

Mr. Mahoney: I guess history would show us, though, that many of the values, the virtues such as religion and the general character that is developed in a young person, are done through a combination of the education system and other influences. The family has great influence. The parents and the church can have great influence. Facilities like the YMCA have had a tremendous impact on developing those kinds of attitudes. I wonder if some of the areas—I am not saying they do, but I am just questioning and wondering—of trying to define an educated person perhaps go beyond the scope of an education system and require some other facility or co-ordination.

The centres you talked about almost sound communal in a sense. I am not sure our society is

prepared to accept that particular role of communal family learning. It sounds a little like China, to tell you the truth.

Mr. Pitman: I do not think we have come upon that yet.

Mr. Mahoney: I just wonder if the scope is too much for the purposes of this committee. Should we be zeroing in on a little less, a little more quality in certain areas, and perhaps looking at other aspects of society to deal with the balance of it?

Mr. Pitman: I have no hesitation in saying that what you are suggesting in developing quality is extremely important, but it comes back, I think, to Mrs. O'Neill's comment a few moments ago. One of the ways we can develop those other attributes or strengthen some of those attributes would be in the area of the voluntary sector.

If we could develop co-operative programs in which young people spend time working in Ys and perhaps even in churches and in many other kinds of facilities, working with the blind and working with the retarded, that could be one of the most effective ways of developing our young people to have a sense of their responsibility in the contribution to the community that they should be making, which would certainly strengthen some of those areas.

That could be done as a co-operative program with the school and the community. Indeed, I think it is one of the most important ways. I have seen it happen. It can work, but it takes a little bit of extra resources to provide the people who are going to make those connections, and also to support the voluntary sector to be able to make that contribution to the educational system. But you are quite right; that is another way that can work.

Madam Chairman: Before we go on to the next question, I have a supplementary on that.

You and Mr. Mahoney have both, I think, mentioned that school is not where everything has to happen; yet I am wondering if in our society today we do not have too great expectations of the school. When I look at my children's curriculum, I see everything on it from the environment to nuclear waste to AIDS to sex education. It is not that there is any one of those that I think is not a very valid thing, but then on top of that you have great pressure to go back to the basics, to be teaching more English, history and math. You wonder if there is not just too much pressure on the school.

Mr. Pitman: I think there certainly needs to be a look at the curriculum. I would not say we

should start teaching less English or less mathematics. We might want to take a look at what we are teaching in those areas and see whether they are still relevant.

I expect to spend some years in some purgatory for having spent my time teaching grade 8 students the British constitution and all the kings of England. Some of the things we teach young people are really senseless and mindless. I think we should be taking a look at those aspects of the curriculum, but that does not mean that we should not also be preparing those young people to look at the kinds of problems they are going to have to face.

Obviously, the first response when AIDS comes on the scene is, "Dump it into the schools and let the schools look after it." Of course, you have an audience. We do not have compulsory education; we have compulsory attendance. The point is that as long as you have compulsory attendance, then you feel you can impose anything on young people, which says something about our whole system, of the use of the community.

The point I would make is that I think we should be taking a look at what kids can and do learn as individuals. When you think that they only retain 15 per cent of some of the things they learn, by all psychological tests; with all that we have learned about learning in the last 20 years, we do not make the most effective use of our time in schools that we could.

That is why I think this committee could well address the issue of the effective curriculum. To what extent are we being imposed upon by post-secondary education institutions as to what they want young people to learn and to know? I do not mean skills like reading and numeracy: to what extent are they therefore being deprived of what they should know? I am talking about the arts, in some cases, AIDS, nuclear waste, environmental deterioration and so on.

So I think a good look at the curriculum is certainly something that should happen. When Mr. Radwanski came to look at the curriculum, he simply added to it. You do not find anything in that report that is going to help you narrow down that response to the overloaded curriculum.

Madam Chairman: Basically, you feel we can achieve that balance. We just have to look and make sure that what we are teaching is relevant.

Mr. Pitman: That is right, and also make sure that here you are preparing teachers and nurturing those teachers. When you have tired and overloaded teachers, that is when you get busy

work and that is when you get really wasted time.

I think we should take a look at the learning time. For example, we bring kids to school at nine o'clock in the morning and we let them go at 3:30 or four in the afternoon. We have been doing that for a century. In terms of all we know about learning time, the span of attention that young people have—they do it at the age of six and they do it at the age of 18—we know that has nothing to do with learning. It has something to do with custodial care, I think, but it has very little to do with what they are expected to know at the end of the day.

Do we not need to look at that? Maybe there are other ways in which we could be dealing with young people, perhaps in sports, recreation or co-operative education throughout some of those hours, which would still handle the problem of custodial care but would provide for individual development in a way that sitting in a classroom simply cannot do.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: There is one thing I learned yesterday from the Ministry of Education people and from my two-year stint on the Windsor Board of Education, 12 or whatever number of years ago it was. You say you are going to spend some time in purgatory for teaching certain things; I am going to spend some time in purgatory because I remember the platform I ran on as a trustee. It was a return to the basics. It was popular and it got me elected, but then I got educated.

Mr. Mahoney: This is purgatory, by the way.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: This is hell.

There have been so many reports and so many statements of philosophy, many of which are very similar stated in different ways. The aims that were presented to us yesterday fit very nicely into your statement of an educated person. Perhaps we can come out of this committee with something practical so that actually at the end of 10 years we can say: "There were some practical recommendations from this committee that were actually implemented. We saw in the classrooms some real changes."

I am not sure how much fundamental change in the way we teach kids has occurred in the past 25, 30 or maybe larger number of years. That may go back to teacher education and how we get that to change, with some really practical recommendations that might not be the grand plan, but something that the system will pay attention to and that might get implemented. Are there some real, practical things you can tell us today?

1040

Mr. Pitman: I wish I could solve that problem for you. I think if you can do that, it will be marvellous.

A great deal has happened to the way teachers teach in classrooms. That is one of the things I reacted so strongly to in Mr. Radwanski's report. The system has not been running on empty for the past 20 or 25 years.

If I was to suggest one thing that I would hope the committee would do, it would be to read the Hall-Dennis report. Just read it and think what has happened as a result of that report over 20 or 25 years. It has become the whipping boy of every reactionary who thinks that the education system is on the rocks. Read the report. It is really quite surprising and in fact quite inspiring to realize that has been the gas that has been powering the motor for quite some time.

One thing that we have to realize too is that the system is not in a state of disrepair. Sometimes I think we get caught up in the rhetoric of being a part of the North American continent. There are states in the United States where the education system is just simply a shambles, and it is largely because they failed to pay their teachers properly and they depended really upon exploiting women over the past 25 years. Now women are going into other professions such as law and medicine. They are no longer prepared to be exploited by the education system, and now it is really in trouble.

Remember, we have now been drawing into our teachers' colleges across this province some of the best students in the entire graduating classes of our universities and we have been taking only a small number of them because we simply do not have room for any more and we do not have a need for any more. We have a substantial number of first-class teachers who are being deprived of the opportunity to be as imaginative and creative as they could be. Part of this is structure, part of this is time, part of this is the overload; all these things.

I think this committee has no reason to feel that we are in a state of crisis and that unless this committee comes up with the answer the whole province is going to pieces. As I say, there are some practical things you can do and you have already begun to take a look at those things.

I would think that providing as much resource and as much time and energy to the preparation and nurturing of teachers would be the first priority of this committee. As I say, making recommendations that would bring about a very critical look at the curriculum and the integrated

curriculum, philosophically, would be another major contribution that this committee could make, and also ensuring that young people have the necessary skills, the literacies. I see those literacies as not just reading or numeracy, but also social literacies that enable people to live in a very complex world and artistic literacies that enable people to express themselves and to understand a complex world.

In other words, there are things that this committee could do. In fact, we are all watching you with great enthusiasm.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Could you expand on the comments you made about streaming? I was not sure whether I understood you to say that if we are not going to put the resources into place to provide for individual attention, then streaming is better than just integration without the proper supports.

Mr. Pitman: The research we have now would indicate that keeping a young person way behind, having a 15-year-old in grade 6, is not going to benefit either the 15-year-old or the grade 6. I think we have learned a great deal about humiliating and making school a place of failure. Those are the things we certainly want to stop from happening.

Putting a whole group of young people who are the same age into a classroom is by definition an exercise in futility in some ways, because there is just such an enormous range of ability, enthusiasm, background, family influence, community; all these things. What you are really dealing with are 30 different individuals. The real success is to what extent you can take each of those individuals as far as they can possibly go.

If we could have a teacher for every student or a teacher for every three or four students, that would be wonderful, but that is not on. Therefore, we have to do some kind of grouping of kids who have somewhat the same abilities or the same enthusiasms.

Streaming has been rightly criticized, because it seems to have had the effect of ensuring that people who have English as a second language or people who live in poorer districts or people who come from lower socioeconomic levels, tend to go into a particular stream and tend to end up in a dead end. I think that is the danger. I think a much more thoughtful and a much more responsive form of grouping young people and individualizing their educational experience is required. One thing we do have in our hands now is some technology to be able to individualize a great deal more than we have been able to do in the past,

and that is what we should be putting our attention to.

Madam Chairman: We have Mr. Jackson and Mr. Keyes still on the list and, unfortunately, we are fast running out of time.

Mr. Pitman: I will be very short, Madam Chairman.

Madam Chairman: Actually, I was hoping the questioners would be rather short so that it would give you time to answer.

Mr. Jackson: I was rather hoping the chair would rotate questions a little better. We will work on that.

First, I would like to thank Mr. Pitman for such a thoughtful presentation, especially confining such a broad field into nine pages, which will serve this committee well. You are the first presenter and I think you have set an excellent tone. Not to sound partisan, but you have made some condemnations of the Premier's Council from its particular perspective on education and with respect to Mr. Radwanski. Your comments on page 2 fascinate me. You indicate that there seems to be a void. You refer to us as being "without a system of institutions for preparing skilled workers" here in Ontario and you say that we should not look to the elementary and secondary system to fill that void.

Your having been, I believe, a professor at Trent, the president of our first polytechnical in this province and now at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education: What happened to Ryerson, which is now becoming less a polytechnical and more a university, and why have our colleges of applied arts and technology not fulfilled their initial dream in terms of providing the skills and technical training?

I am serious. Your thesis is that we should not look to the elementary and secondary system, that something is missing, and yet we had a vision that we were developing. What happened? If, in fact, it is the void that you suggest, what do you recommend we do? Do we need more polytechnics? Should we be dividing some of the university curricula and focus and goals, for example? Is that the solution?

Mr. Pitman: That is a complex question and a very good one. I want to suggest to you that I think the reason we went in this direction was because of a peculiar state in our history. We were in a position, after the Second World War, of being able to bring over people from other countries who had this training. In fact, in one year I did a study and discovered that more

people came from the polytechnics of the United Kingdom than came from the universities.

We in this country developed the colleges of applied arts and technology, which are doing an amazing job, but we have put upon them so many things, from adult literacy to community programming to retraining. I think when Mr. Davis introduced the bill he suggested there might be two-year, three-year, four-year and five-year programs in those colleges; essentially, we still have only two-year programs. That is not at a high enough level to cope with the Pacific Rim countries, where they are now moving into technology with a vengeance. We simply have not been able to do that.

I think we just simply did not produce in this sector the polytechnics they have in virtually all the European countries and the UK. We have no MITs or Cal Techs in this country, or polytechnics such as they have in the United States, like Rochester and so on, and I think this is just a historical quirk that transpired. I do not think anybody really tried to make it this way.

What we need now is a degree of co-operative development between universities and colleges and the private sector, not new institutions. We cannot afford to build more institutions or more administrations, more bureaucrats. I think we have to develop the capacity for every university, for each university, and have the people who are in the sciences in those universities work with the people who are in the colleges and in the private sector to develop a new focus that will allow us to provide that kind of training.

To provide training for high-technicians and high-technologists is a hands-on kind of training and it is a very different kind of product that you get than you get from the university, which tends to be more theoretical, and rightly so.

As well as that, I would hate to see us divert universities away from the needs we have for their social and artistic and humanitarian development towards just simply becoming almost obsessed with technological and technical development.

1050

Mr. Jackson: But your thesis is very clear. On page 2 you indicate it is not a role for the university system to fulfil. I am trying to get you to give us more focus on what should happen between secondary school graduation at grade 12 or grade 13 or drop-outs, and a mature re-entry to a system that somewhere in between, in your opinion, is going to fulfil many of the technological challenges. We will develop something in a child through young adulthood to prepare him for

an experience which could be broadly served within this system which you say is lacking to a degree.

Mr. Pitman: That is right.

Mr. Jackson: I am asking you to give us, very briefly, some recommendations. Do we need a specific MIT, to redefine an institution in Ontario that becomes an MIT? Do we take Ryerson back to its original mandate?

Mr. Pitman: One of the problems that is forced upon Ryerson and which forced Ryerson in the direction towards a university was, of course, our professional organizations. One has to take a look at the power of the professional organizations to determine who gets remunerated, who gets status and who gets position. Technicians and technologists in this country, unlike many other countries, do not have that status and position and power, and as a result that is what forces a Ryerson towards being a university so its graduates can get that status, as opposed to being a single polytechnic or a single institution of that nature.

To go back to your main question, though, I think it is having several universities, several colleges working together in a consortium: for example, Lakehead University, Confederation College and the private sector in Thunder Bay; Carleton, Algonquin and the private sector in that area in the Ottawa region, Silicon Valley North in the Ottawa region; in other words, developing these sectors around the province. That is the only way we can fill that void.

What I am saying is not that we should not look to the secondary and elementary schools, but we should not expect them to answer the questions that were being asked by the Premier's Council on technology.

Mr. Jackson: There is a lot here I would like to get into, but I am very pleased that you highlighted the motivation and appropriateness of effective teaching. Radwanski dealt with it briefly; it is one of the areas of his report that deserves some clear examination.

I got a sense from you in your comments that elements of planning time, overloaded curriculum and so on, the standard things, are of concern. Are you as well concerned about teacher effectiveness and evaluation, which has labour implications, if I can put it in that context? The college of teachers has not found favour among teachers in this province, and yet that was an initiative that had considerable merit: the retraining of teachers who are inappropriately teaching in this province so that they can, in transition, move to other employment because

they are inappropriate as teachers. We have to admit that we have them. We also have excellent teachers; that is why we pay them as well as we do.

Would you comment a little further on teacher effectiveness and evaluation? It is an area where I feel this committee can have a significant impact, I agree with you; that and curriculum reforms. When we compare what we do with curriculum here in this province compared to other provinces, we can be rightfully embarrassed.

Mr. Pitman: In the whole business of teacher evaluation, I would hate to see Ontario go in the direction of what is taking place in the United Kingdom and in some parts of the United States, for example, where bashing teachers becomes a solution to all the problems of education.

I think there is more to be gained by various forms of dealing—for example, I think Michael Connelly and Michael Fullan's report on teacher education is the basis for the development of an effective preparation of teachers; that and making sure you bring the right teachers into the system far more. It gives you three or four years to see that you do that.

Mr. Jackson: What about measuring teachers after five and 10 and 15 years?

Mr. Pitman: I think what we have to do is think far more in terms of leaves. Personally, I would get rid of professional development days or whatever they call them now, these days that usually create havoc in virtually every community when they have them, and give teachers time that is more concentrated and can be more effectively dealt with to be able to refresh and revitalize themselves and to really plug into a program of personal development. There are coaching techniques that are getting a lot of attention from a lot of school boards now.

In other words, I think you can destroy a great deal by putting too much emphasis and attention on evaluation and trying to nail teachers on the basis of whatever failings they have, destroying the collegiality, destroying what I think is the teamwork of a school, which really can make a place an exciting spot to learn.

Mr. Keyes: Teacher training is what I wanted to focus on, so my thanks to Mr. Jackson. I do want to make two quick comments first and then I have one question; that is, in relation to some of what Mr. Jackson is concerned about, and which Mr. Pitman spoke on, the co-operative effort, we are seeing come about in the current move towards the centres of excellence. We are using universities and community colleges and the

private sector to produce some very fine work in those areas.

Mr. Pitman: But essentially it is tied to research. What we are talking about here is we are tying it to the central job of training, of education, of giving courses and programs to students.

Mr. Keyes: I just think the model is there.

Mr. Pitman: The model is there, that is right.

Mr. Keyes: The start is there, which has not been there before.

The only disappointment of mine—I am glad Mr. Pitman mentioned it—is the fact that I do think the type of vision Emmett Hall and Lloyd Dennis had back 20 years ago is the type of thing we still do need to look at right now. While he was often castigated for his comments, I think he did have that type of insight, and it is one of my disappointments that we did not have Mr. Dennis speaking to us somewhere in this first two weeks of our session. We think many of those visions that he had 20 years ago—while the report never got accepted by the government, certainly many things happened. Most reports never get accepted, but many things do happen. I was glad to see Mr. Pitman make reference to them.

While we are talking about philosophy and goals of education, one of the things, though, is that we are overlooking to some extent, going back to Mrs. O'Neill's question, the role of the school itself. We talked about it as a straight physical structure. I think we have to change. I am disappointed in seeing the direction that some of the schools and school boards are going in today with the actual use of the physical structure. I think that can fill a much more fulfilling role, and we will see whether you agree with me or not.

When we talk about continuing education, we really have to see the school as being the neighbourhood centre, not create a new neighbourhood centre but get back to making that school the neighbourhood centre so that any of the literacy programs for those who did not make it the first time around can be there in a totally different environment, so that it does become the centre and does have perhaps day care facilities in it and it is the place where community groups meet. The Flint, Michigan, experiment is still as valid today as it was 30 and 40 years ago, and I think we need to emulate that more.

One of the problems we have nowadays is that school boards are saying community groups cannot use the school. The first thing they throw up today is the problem of liability insurance and they use that as the biggest bugbear to keep

schools from being accessible to other community groups after the regular school day. We have to look at that. Or they look at plant maintenance and say it cannot be done.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: There has always been an excuse.

Mr. Keyes: There are so many excuses. It is either liability insurance today, plant maintenance, our unionized workers. All of these problems have the simplest of solutions if the boards just wanted to expand their minds a bit. I hope that somewhere we will look at the role of the school. We need to have the architects who design new schools be more imaginative about what can be put into the school structure as a community centre, as the neighbourhood centre. I wonder if you would agree with that, because that is where we need to make a stand as a committee as well.

Mr. Pitman: I could not agree more. In fact, if you search the records of this Legislature, you will find that aeons ago I put up a number of private member's bills about this very thing, and I hope this committee would take a look at the community school as being one its major opportunities. Thank you very much, Madam Chairman.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much, Mr. Pitman. We really appreciate the contribution you have made to our committee today.

Next on the agenda we have the Retail Council of Canada. Mr. McKichan—I hope I have pronounced your name correctly—if you would like to bring forward your delegation, and after they are seated introduce yourself for the purposes of electronic Hansard.

1100

RETAIL COUNCIL OF CANADA

Mr. McKichan: Thank you, Madam Chairman. We are pleased to have the opportunity to appear before the committee this morning. On my left is Gordon Murray, who is vice-president of human resources of Towers and chairman of the committee within our organization that deals with education as one of its responsibilities. On my right is my colleague Peter Woolford, who is the vice-president of the organization.

I should just outline in a word our constituency. I do not intend to absorb all our time by reading our statement. If I may, I will paraphrase the main elements in it. Our membership consists of retailers who, among them, perform something like 65 per cent of Canada's total retail business. Within Ontario, the share is approxi-

mately the same. The retail trade within Ontario employs close to half a million people and, of course, is one of the largest employers of young people, particularly both students who are in their final years of full-time education and school leavers.

We are not appearing before you as knowledgeable professional educationists—that of course is not our role—but we do feel we have some knowledge about the abilities and attributes of the young people whom our member companies hire as they leave high school. Retail is, of course, a major employer of people who terminate their education at high school levels.

I know the committee has heard, and it is certainly a truism, that the world of work is becoming more challenging and more information-intensive and, as a result, the level of educational attainment which is needed to survive is rising. Regrettably, our trade is finding—and I believe the same experience is found by others—the young people applying for retail jobs to be less well educated in the basic skills than they were even 20 years ago, and indeed less well prepared for the demands of working life.

The educational system, in the view of our members, seems to be serving best the top 25 to 50 per cent of the students who go through the system. Those who take high school courses intended to prepare them for post-secondary education do generally acquire the basic skills, but the schools, we feel, are not meeting the needs of those students who rely on only their high school education for their equipment in life.

Some we find are unable to fill in the forms to apply for employment or internal work reports. Some cannot comprehend manuals and instructions concerning store procedures and the use of equipment. Some are incapable of understanding and carrying out oral instructions from managers or customers. Some lack the arithmetic skills, even to calculate sales tax or make change. Some lack the verbal skills to speak informatively to customers. All of these abilities, modest as they are, are required for the most junior entry-level positions in the trade.

It is certain that failings like these are a personal tragedy for the individuals concerned. They are condemned either to make up on their own the education that the schools fail to give them or to a lifetime of low-paying and unfulfilling jobs. It is also, I would suggest, a national tragedy. In today's open-world economy, a high-quality labour force is probably the only way for Canada to keep abreast of its

international competition and maintain its standard of living.

With this background, we would suggest two key objectives for education. First, to provide a curriculum and learning experience which will keep young people in school until they graduate from high school because they want to be there for the learning experience; second, to give these young people the abilities they will need to solve problems and take action in their adult lives, including reading for meaning and being able to solve problems, being able to write and speak clearly enough to communicate both facts and concepts, being able to calculate the transactions that we all must make in our lives; and to listen, an attribute that sadly is lacking in many, both for information and meaning.

We believe the purpose of education is to prepare our young people for a lifetime of learning. The formal education system through grade 13 must, we suggest, give them the essential skills and attributes they need to do this.

Our industry is no different from any other. It is becoming increasingly complex, more driven by the information technologies and, of course, requiring at all levels within it these attributes of which we have spoken.

Thank you, Madam Chairman. We will be happy to respond to questions. Mr. Murray can give you some direct information on his firm's experience in the recruiting world and in dealing with substantial staff in the workforce.

Madam Chairman: Would either of your colleagues like to make comments at this time or would you prefer to go directly to questions?

Mr. Murray: Thank you, Madam Chairman. I believe, from my point of view, that Mr. McKichan certainly captured what we wished to say. I would also suggest that this is not the first time you have heard these comments, so the comments we do make perhaps have an air of déjà vu about them. Be that as it may, we would certainly like to help in any way we can by responding to your questions.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mrs. O'Neill.

Mrs. O'Neill: Your judgement call on the education system is a rather harsh one, and when you say "used to" or "not as prepared as," I suppose my first question is, what time frame are you talking about? Are you talking about the 1960s in relation to the 1980s, or the 1950s in relation to—what time frame are we talking about?

Mr. McKichan: We did talk about the 20-year time frame, but I think if we went back

further than that, the same situation would apply on the basics of education. Thirty years ago, recruits to the industry, on average, appeared to be better prepared in the basics of education than they are today.

Mrs. O'Neill: OK. I presume some of your members have been involved in the co-operative education programs, which seem to be increasing. Do you feel that is a very worthwhile project? Do you feel that is one way the skills you mention—which are basic skills, I will admit, as you delineate them—could be engendered? Or do you think there should be more emphasis on these particular skills within the individual classroom? Or do you have other ideas of what the education system could do?

Mr. Murray: I would suggest that perhaps it should be a combination of both. Certainly the co-op education system, I personally believe, is well worth pursuing. It provides young people the opportunity to experience work, perhaps for the first time, and I think it gives them an understanding that there are certain things, certain skills and attributes which they must have in order to be successful, whatever that means, and in order to be able to provide for themselves and their families. But certainly the other should not be overlooked. We come back again to the basic Rs, which are, we believe, extremely important.

Mr. McKichan: I think the situation is that, as an industry, our requirements of the system are much more modest than those of others. For a significant percentage of our workforce, we are not looking for particular technical qualifications; we are looking for competence in the very basic skills of numeracy and literacy.

It used to be 30 years ago that you did not have to be very literate to be a warehouseman. That is no longer the case. You have to be able to take instructions from a computer; you have to be able to punch in responses to a computer; you have to be able to understand relatively complex sets of instructions, and the fact is that a significant percentage of the recruits do not meet these standards.

It is extremely difficult, I think, in our members' experience, to deal with someone who has really a literacy problem and to tell that person that his problem is one of literacy and to get him to acknowledge that and to take the remedial courses. It is very hard for an adult to accept that fact. It is our belief that the first duty of the education system should be to ensure that almost nobody escapes from the system without

being literate, and it seems to us that we are not achieving that.

Mrs. O'Neill: If I may just continue, Mr. McKichan, for one second: You seem then to intimate that the demands placed on your employees are much different than they were 30 years ago.

Mr. McKichan: They are higher.

1110

Mrs. O'Neill: So the judgement call regarding whether the schools are or are not doing a better job is really a two-edged sword here.

Mr. McKichan: The demands are higher and the average qualifications are lower, so it is the worst of all possible worlds.

Mrs. O'Neill: OK. I will leave that.

Madam Chairman: We have Mr. Cooke, Mr. Jackson and Mr. Reycraft.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I have just a brief question. I do not know how you are making the judgement call; I do not know what criteria you are using. You said at one point, I think in answer to Mrs. O'Neill, that you were looking at a 20-year period, and then you said you were looking at a 30-year period. What criteria are you using to make an assessment, and are you then changing the criteria by talking about the different, and obviously vastly different, requirements in your industry now than they were 20 or 30 years ago?

To come into this committee this morning and make this condemnation of the system now as compared to 30 years ago, I think it is incumbent on your association to give us a little bit more evidence than just the judgement call of a couple of people at a table without any criteria and without any research.

Mr. McKichan: Our submission was not, as you can imagine, prepared in the abstract; it was prepared under the direction of a committee of 15 people, all of whom are engaged in the management and hiring of substantial numbers of staff into their organizations.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: But not all of whom were involved in it 30 years ago.

Mr. McKichan: No, but some of them were, and it is the personal knowledge of many of them that 20 years ago there was not a high percentage of applicants for jobs who could not fill in an application form. Regrettably, that cannot be said today. It seems to me that that is a very basic test of literacy, a test which in many cases is being failed. I would suggest to you that 30 years ago the number who could not fill in an application form was probably even smaller. So I

think in this very basic element our education system has failed us, and we had better face up to that and do something about it.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I remember, again, when I was on the board of education and this whole matter of the three Rs was discussed regularly at board meetings, our director of education played a nasty trick on us. He put a number of reports in our biweekly meeting agenda and asked us to read them. We read them and we thought, "Holy mackerel, we've got all these reports that condemn the education system and say that our students can't read." The only problem was that the reports came from the 1920s and 1930s. They were exactly the same comments about the education system back then that were made in the 1970s and, I suggest, the same comments that you are making in the 1980s.

Kids who graduate from our system are going to have a range of abilities. When I see comments from universities saying that the high school graduates who come to university now cannot read and cannot write, and then you look at the numbers of students who are now going to university compared to back in the 1960s and the 1950s, you see that obviously there is going to be a different range of individuals getting into our post-secondary education system as well, and I think that is a significant improvement.

I do not say that you are right and I do not say that you are wrong. I just do not think it is appropriate to come before the committee today with anecdotal information which is not fair, I think, to the system. If you are going to make those kinds of comments, there were people who did not fill out their application forms correctly 20 or 30 years ago either. If you have some concrete suggestions as to how the system can be improved, how the system can be made more humane, how more students can remain in the system for longer periods of time—but I really do not think it is appropriate to come forward and condemn the system in the way you have without any real, substantial evidence to back up your claims.

Mr. McKichan: Mr. Cooke, as we say, we are not educationists and we feel it is not appropriate for us to direct either suggestions or criticisms in an area where we are not equipped to do so. What we can speak to are the results of the system. When a group of employers employing such large numbers of new graduates—and our industry is probably the largest employer of new entrants into the labour force of all the sectors—when they almost universally make that statement about their disappointment in the quality of

the very basic academic skills of the entrants, I think we have to take notice of that. It seems to me that is a very valuable piece of information, which this committee and the educational system as a whole should take notice of.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I do not know that it is correct, so I cannot accept it unless I know that it is correct. I think it is more of a philosophical reaction to the education system today as opposed to 30 years ago when many of your members might in fact have been going through the school system.

Mr. Murray: Mr. Cooke, if I may just add a few words, the comments you have made are, I suppose, the same type of comments that the three of us made just this morning prior to coming here. We have talked about that. Be that as it may, our problem is that the people who do come to enter the retail trade are people whom we feel have difficulty. I think this is a fact. Some of them have difficulty.

That is a generalization. We are dealing here with generalizations obviously. Generalizations are always dangerous and we agree and recognize that fully. But some people have that difficulty. We can extend that further and talk about the type of competitive situation that we are going to face as a country. Certainly within my working lifetime we expect the impact of free trade will be felt in our sector. How it is going to affect us we certainly do not know.

The question that we ask ourselves is, how do we stack up against other countries? I think we have to be concerned about that also. We are not here—it is unfortunate perhaps that you are looking upon our submission as one that has been devised to attack and condemn the educational system. I do not believe that this is so at all. We are here to submit to you our concerns.

Certainly we have no statistical data to provide to you. We have not taken the effort to do the type of study that perhaps you are alluding to and think should be done. I am just wondering whether that is our responsibility. Perhaps it is the educationists' responsibility to pursue that further.

Be that as it may, I did say earlier that it seems to me that I have a feeling of *déjà vu*. Where have I heard this before and where have I seen this before? I suggest to you, sir, you have also heard it before and seen it before. So I do not think that what we ought to do is hurl brickbats at each other. I think what we want to do is to be in a position where we can find some kind of common-ground solution by which we can help overcome this problem.

A suggestion by Mrs. O'Neill earlier was the comment that working in conjunction with the educationists through co-operative education is something which should be pursued. I think, Mrs. O'Neill, you inferred that perhaps rather than stating it; but certainly I believe that very strongly.

Mrs. O'Neill: I will state it, if you think I am only inferring it, because I really do believe in co-operative education.

Mr. Murray: So do I. I am talking about personal points of view.

Mr. McKichan: I believe the study done by the Canadian Business Task Force on Literacy found that the level of functional illiteracy, as I recall it, among adults in the population is somewhere around 20 per cent, about 25 per cent actually.

It seems to me that if we look at our national strategic position, that is surely an issue we have to address with a high degree of priority. How are we going to survive in the competitive world, where very shortly almost every job is going to require a significant level of literacy, with a 25 per cent illiteracy rate in our population?

This problem is not unique to Canada. I think the level in the United States is only slightly lower, but it is substantially lower in most of the European countries. Even a country like the United Kingdom has an illiteracy rate somewhere in the low teens, I think. It is a problem that it seems to me we have to address.

1120

Mr. Jackson: Mr. McKichan, I have some concerns about some of the comments you are making. However, I hope we could maybe balance them off with your expertise as a retailer and not as an educator. For the last 30 years, which I think is the time frame you indicated, your experience has been in the retail business.

Mr. McKichan: Around the retail business, not directly in the retail business.

Mr. Jackson: Is it possible that the number of illiterate citizens in our society has been reduced, but that more have surfaced in the retail industry in the last 30 years?

Mr. McKichan: That is a possibility in the sense that there are more opportunities for higher level skills in other types of occupations than there were formerly. In other words, retail is recruiting from a diminishing pool.

Mr. Jackson: Would you say the average entry age in the retail profession has dropped in the last 30 years?

Mr. McKichan: I think it has probably increased.

Mr. Jackson: Do you mean you are getting older people getting into—

Mr. McKichan: It is because people are staying at school longer. Traditionally it is—

Mr. Jackson: Could you cite an example for me? My understanding is the opposite, that with the increased drop-out rate and the increased marketing pressures, the average age of a person who works in retail, a clerk or whatever, is in fact lower. That is my understanding of the demographics of your profession. The evidence of that is a function of the rate of pay, the lack of benefits in some areas, the move to part-time at an older age. We do not have 68-year-old grandmothers selling acid-washed jeans at Big Steel. We just do not have that here. I am not saying that is good or bad, that is a whole other issue; I am trying, from your expertise as a retailer, to get a better understanding of the elements, of the kind of people who work in retail today in larger numbers than, say 30 years ago.

Mr. McKichan: I think the average age probably has increased because of the number of mature part-time employees who come back to the labour force after their child-bearing years.

Mr. Jackson: Then let us say the average of full-time, which is what you are seeking in most instances, has increased among young people.

Mr. Murray: It is difficult for me to respond.

Mr. Jackson: I am aware of the older worker dynamics in retail. My wife's whole family is in retail and I am familiar with that. I have a very strong opinion I would like you to react to with respect to the fact that wages have not kept pace, for whatever reasons. I understand the pressures in retail. We have even got a political party in this province that wants you to work all day Sunday, but there are enough pressures on your margin and that manifests itself in low wages. In the last 30 years, the retail wage has not kept up with inflation. That is another fair statement to make.

Mr. McKichan: I do not think the ratio of the retail wage to the average industrial wage has significantly departed from the—

Mr. Jackson: The number of people participating in the industrial sector has been reduced, as you know. Thirty years ago, many of our unskilled and less educated workers and citizens ended up on farms and in factories. There was migrant work available in Ontario at that time, which is now evaporating. There has been a relative explosion in retail, which has grown sizeably in the last 30 years in terms of our gross

provincial productivity. The retail sector has increased immensely and so has the fast food and restaurant sector. They are the two fastest growing of Canada's sectors.

These are all relative factors for you, as a retail professional, to enlighten us about the dynamics of your profession, and therefore the demands that you put on our system. We cannot create a system which responds to such an amorphous or changing, challenging area as retail. I am not suggesting there is not your earlier point that there is need for improvement in our educational system which presents people who apply for jobs in your malls and retail establishments who cannot complete an application with any degree of competence or assurance; but if that individual is 16 years of age, is seeking employment for the very first time and is prepared to settle for a minimum wage, there are other factors that should be considered.

You are promoting managers who are getting community college degrees. My brother-in-law is now one of the head buyers with Dylex, having graduated from Sheridan College. There are other programs that have occurred coterminous to these challenges you are presenting us with. Maybe there should be a little more balance in terms of some of those positive things that have been occurring. That might be helpful.

Mr. McKichan: It is absolutely true that we are competing with more competitors for what is now a shrinking group of candidates, so your point is probably correct in the sense that a lesser qualified segment of the population is presenting itself for employment than was the case formerly, but that does not solve the problem that our industry and every other industry still has increasing demands for qualifications and the basic skills in all their employees. It really does not matter whether the decline is relative or absolute. The fact is that we are not meeting the challenge the world is posing to us.

Mr. Jackson: There are some co-operative models occurring in Ontario now that are working with shift work and with retail positions where you would take a group of employees and the government, through the school system, would provide certain training, through teachers, to employees. Has the Retail Council of Canada sat down with any of the following, the provincial government, a specific board or a combination of boards of education or the federal government through some of its funding models, to look at those kinds of training programs? I know you spend a reasonable amount on training, but it is specifically function oriented. It

is to learn and master specific machinery that is required to conduct the sale and merchandising of your goods and services. Beyond that, are you looking at those areas?

Mr. McKichan: Actually, we are. We have had recent conversations, both with the federal training people and also with the Skills Development people in Ontario. We believe there is a possibility of getting some directed assistance and help in some of the skills-related areas.

However, that is not our basic problem. Our basic problem is that we get back to literacy and numeracy. That is where we have our greatest difficulties. We do not feel that has to be tackled after the employee gets into the work force. Surely that is something that should be tackled in the schools. What in heaven's name do you go to school for if you do not go to learn to read and to learn to count? Everything else, it seems to me, is desirable, or a lot of the stuff is desirable, but surely that is the core of the demand of the student and the goal of the teacher.

Mr. Jackson: I am sorry to monopolize this line of questioning, but you have not responded to Mr. Radwanski's recommendation with respect to limiting the high school part-time employment experience for the average student in this province, which Radwanski alluded to in one of his recommendations. Could you briefly comment on that or indicate why you avoided reference to that. Did you feel it was not part of what you were called upon to do, and if so, will you come back when we look at that element of it?

1130

Mr. McKichan: I think it may well be that the kind of experience, and indeed education many students get in their part-time employment is at least as meaningful to them as the education they are getting in the schools. We have not directed most of our attention to the student who is going on to further education; there may be conflicts between the demands placed on such students at work in terms of their academic courses.

Mr. Jackson: The need to earn money to pay for rising tuition costs. That is a way of doing it, right?

Mr. McKichan: In terms of this particular element of our concern, I cannot see time spent in a part-time job as in any way inhibiting the ability of the teachers to teach or the students to learn. They should have learned these skills before they were old enough to work.

Madam Chairman: I have just checked the schedule for September, which has not been

solidified yet, but I notice you are on the speaking list for that, so we will anticipate having your comments at that time in addition.

The last questioner is Mr. Reycraft.

Mr. Reycraft: The debate we got into earlier during this presentation is not a new one. I am sure Mr. Murray was not the only one here with a sense of déjà vu as we observed that debate. As one who was an educator for 23 years, and I say that just so you know the bias I may have, I am still frequently confronted by individuals who will make the allegation that the education system is not doing nearly as good a job as it was 20, 25 or 30 years ago. People will then provide a couple of examples as evidence of that and the debate ensues.

I think there is a tendency for people, as they engage in that debate, to lose track of a couple of things. First of all, the reality is that there has always been and will always be a difference between people in the amount of instructional time that is required for them to reach a level of competency in any skill, including literacy and numeracy.

Just to follow up on that point, I would submit that we are now providing much more instruction within the education system in this province for those who fall at the upper end of that scale than we ever have in our history, and I am not aware of any area in the country that is doing more. So in terms of giving people instruction in reading, arithmetic and the things you addressed particularly, I think more is being done now than ever before.

The other reality is that the demands of society have changed. You used as indicators in your submission that young people were less well educated in basic skills than they were 20 or 30 years ago examples such as forms that they were required to fill out and manuals and instructions that they were required to read. I would suggest that not only are the forms for employment more complicated now than they were 25 years ago, but also that there are many more of them. Many people were able to get employment 25 years ago without filling out any kind of application form, and I do not think we should lose sight of that fact either. The demands have increased significantly.

The problem is there are people who do not, in your opinion, have the ability to provide the skills your positions require. I think we have to work together to find ways to help those people, but the solution will not always be found within the traditional education system. Mr. Pitman, ahead of you this morning, talked about the

person who at the age of 34 learned to read. Much of it has to do with motivation, so continuing education and co-operative education are certainly going to be needed more in the future than they are now.

I do not have a particular question, but I did want to put that perspective on the debate.

Madam Chairman: We certainly enjoyed your comments, if not a question.

Mr. McKichan: If I might add one brief comment, our members have expressed the thought that it is particularly difficult for an employer to discuss the question of an employee's literacy with that employee. That is a very sensitive area of dialogue. It seems to me that in that area it may not be appropriate to look particularly at an employer-employee type of co-operative action for that type of remedial training. It is easier for the employee to deal with that problem with somebody other than his or her employer, some agency within the community that is established.

Interjection.

Mr. Jackson: You have got to help identify them so that the agency can intervene. That is the problem with these kinds of matters.

Mr. Reycraft: The kind of situation to which Mr. McKichan has referred is a very common one and a very valid one, and what is required there is assistance from the employer to direct the employee to institutions within the community that can help him to improve his skills and then to work out co-operatively some system, a schedule that will allow the person to improve those skills, probably in a continuing education situation.

Mr. McKichan: Particularly with a small employer, it is a very sensitive issue to approach with the employee.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. McKichan, for your presentation today. We shall certainly heed your words and consider them with the other presentations we hear. Thank you for coming.

Our next delegation is the Ontario Public School Trustees' Association. I understand it is a fairly large delegation of six members, so if you would like to come forward, Mrs. Wright, after your members are seated, you can introduce your delegation.

ONTARIO PUBLIC SCHOOL TRUSTEES' ASSOCIATION

Mrs. Wright: Thank you for giving us this opportunity to be here. I would like to start off by introducing the members of the committee who

are with me. We have Cheryl Miller, who is the chairman representing the London board; Ken Campbell from Lennox and Addington; Heather Gardiner from Victoria county; Suzan Hall from Etobicoke; and Bob Whitehead from the north shore. I would also like to introduce Marie Pierce, who is our chairman of policy; she has been our resource person. I have invited the members of the committee to join with me because they have worked very hard in putting together the presentation to this committee and I feel it is important that they share in this presentation.

I would like to begin by giving you an overview of the Ontario Public School Trustees' Association and our philosophy. Then, as for our goals of education, I would ask that each member of the committee share in the presentation.

The Ontario Public School Trustees' Association is pleased to be given an opportunity to address the select committee on education on the philosophy and fundamental goals of education. The Ontario Public School Trustees' Association represents 57 boards of education of all sizes from all regions and serves over 780,000 elementary and secondary students reflecting the pluralistic nature of this province.

We are a strong voice for public education in Ontario. As elected representatives, trustees are entrusted to care for and educate the learner in the education system and are accountable for the financial management of that system. Not only do we provide leadership in the setting of educational policy; we must be realistic and responsive to local community concerns. Local school board autonomy is a fundamental component of our education system.

As trustees of the public school education system, our mandate is to ensure that all our public school system is accessible to all, regardless of race and ethnocultural or religious background. In representing the majority of the people in this province, we must ensure that the public school system is a viable and competitive one which offers the highest quality of education for all.

For the purposes of this discussion, we define "education" as the process by which the individual develops through the acquisition of knowledge. Public education, then, is a publicly funded system through which all individuals are given the opportunity for self-development. Plans are now under way for the amalgamation of the three Ontario public school trustees' associations to promote and protect public education in Ontario.

Our educational philosophy is that people are our most important resource. The public education system of this province recognizes within its jurisdiction its responsibility to all the learners of Ontario.

1140

Public education must provide opportunities for learners to acquire knowledge and skills and must be flexible, responsive and adaptive to the specific needs and abilities of the learner.

Learning conditions must be provided which will foster the development of those skills required to prepare individuals for a rapidly changing society. All of this must be provided within a system that is fiscally responsible and reasonable.

Public education is a co-operative process involving the individual, the community and society. It has to provide a structure and model to encourage the development of respect, responsibility and resourcefulness and to foster a spirit of trust and co-operation. This is accomplished through continuous evaluation and public celebration of its successes.

We have identified six goals for education which reflect this general philosophy. They also illustrate what is happening in the public schools of Ontario every day.

Ms. Hall: I will read the first two goals that we have for education. Goal 1 is: The public school system of this province must provide universally accessible educational opportunities to all learners, regardless of their ethnocultural, social or economic status, age, individual exceptionality or religious preference.

Goal 2 is in three parts. The first part is that the public school system of this province must provide courses of study and instructional strategies which are flexible and responsive.

We go on to reiterate that learning involves both content and process, and while these cannot be separated, the balance between them varies according to the age, characteristics and aspirations of learners.

Curricula should recognize the distinct purpose of basic-, general- and advanced-level courses of study. In addition to core curriculum, schools must offer a variety of programs which recognize different learning styles and which encourage students to think and be adaptable in a society characterized by the rapid creation, exchange and application of information and Ontario's place in a global economy. Flexible, open and broad-based curricula which give emphasis to the development of the skills of inquiry and thinking, and place a premium on

students acquiring the lifelong ability to learn, are essential.

Programming of courses should reflect the value of vocational skill development, technological training and academic education. Programs which recognize the importance of bridging the gap between the education system and the workplace are essential in the public schools of this province.

As a process, education cannot be force-fed, but strategies and content must be appropriate to the stage of development, goals, learning style and abilities of the learner.

The second part is that the public school system must ensure competency in core curriculum areas.

The public education system has a responsibility to ensure that a provincially determined, high-quality core education is provided.

Competency assessment is an ongoing process which continues as the individual proceeds through the curriculum and program. Such assessment assumes that expectations have been established and communicated to all learners and that the criteria to be used as the basis of assessment have been agreed upon locally.

Province-wide evaluation of core curriculum areas can be undertaken through the use of the ministry-developed provincial reviews which provide information on the extent to which the curriculum objectives are being met across the province. Individual school boards are able to use this process as one method to meet their own priorities for program review and accountability at the local level.

The third part of our second goal is that the public school system must create an environment which will foster the development of the individual qualities of responsibility, respect and resourcefulness.

The current public school system encourages the development of flexibility and adaptability in the learner.

Expanding the learner's knowledge and skills in dealing with the world beyond the classroom is also encouraged by the public school system through activities such as co-operative education; adopt-a-school; twinning of schools with business, industry, other provinces or countries; extracurricular activities and deliberate community service projects.

We are responsible for educating learners about social attitudes, such as civic duty and equity, and fostering a sense of community and respect for the pluralistic, multicultural nature of society. An environment that fosters the develop-

ment of responsibility, respect and resourcefulness must originate in the classroom. Values education alone cannot teach respect for self and others or civic responsibility or the need to strive towards equity. These attitudes must permeate the school system. The public education system is committed to encouraging the development of these individual qualities in its staff as well as its learners.

Mrs. Miller: I am Cheryl Miller and I will be reading goal 3 to you.

The public school system, through respect for the rights of the individual, the community and society, must accept responsibility for local education governance and the wise use of public funds.

To encourage individuals to learn and to offer a wide range of educational opportunities, school boards must provide a suitable learning environment. This requires an adequate program as well as capital resources. Therefore, there must be adequate financing to ensure that the goals of the system are met.

Funding for education is both a provincial and local responsibility. Through local taxation of both residential and commercial and industrial assessment, public school systems have been able to provide programs that strive to meet both provincially mandated standards and local community wishes.

The past few years have seen many new initiatives by the Ministry of Education in the curriculum field, including the Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions curriculum guidelines renewal process, the emphasis on early primary education and the focus on science in the early grades. All these changes have required additional resources, textbooks, personnel, professional development opportunities and curriculum development. Additional financial support must be forthcoming if a successful implementation of these curriculum initiatives is to occur.

Recent capital allocations for the public school system have fallen short of that which is required, not only for new space but for badly needed renovations, repairs and upgrading of technological facilities in existing schools. The government must substantially increase its total capital grant allocations to the public schools of this province in both new school construction and renovation/repair accounts to ensure that all boards, and consequently all students, benefit from the improvements that occur through capital projects.

The public education system cannot solve all the problems that other societal agents have failed to solve. Education is not a cure-all. Unrealistic expectations which do not take into account the limited classroom time, resources and finances are constantly being placed on the educational system. This results in an overcrowded curriculum in both the elementary and secondary schools.

Mr. Campbell: Goal 4: The public school system must continue to evaluate its effectiveness and relevance in the areas of curriculum, staff performance, facilities and legislation.

The education system is continually changing. To guide this changing nature of the system and to ensure a high-quality public education system, there must be a commitment to a continual review of the quality of the educational opportunities being provided and results achieved. This review involves not only an evaluation of the curriculum but of the current Education Act and regulations. A complete review of the Education Act and regulations is required instead of the piecemeal approach that is currently being undertaken.

Local boards have responsibility to ensure that a staff evaluation process contributes to the achievement of the goals of education.

The current teacher-training system needs to be reviewed. The selection process for teacher trainees, in which undergraduate marks appear to be the major criterion for selection to admission to teacher-training facilities, is inappropriate. This assumes that academic background is the major characteristic required to be a successful teacher or that all other skills and characteristics can be taught in a one-year program. Neither is an appropriate assumption and results in teachers who are probably suited to teaching advanced courses but may not be suited to teaching vocational or technological courses.

Recognizing that the quality of education must be continually assessed and improved does not mean that the whole system has to be revamped and changed. Our current public education system is not running on empty. It is providing a wide variety of educational opportunities to a wide variety of learners. Instead of overcorrecting and overregulating the current system, what is needed is some refinement and nurturing to make a high quality system even better.

For example, recognizing and publicizing exemplary practices, which respond effectively to student needs so they may be emulated by other schools and school systems, is preferable to a provincial solution, universally imposed.

Ms. Gardiner: I am Heather Gardiner and this is goal 5.

The public school system must provide direction to ensure accountability and foster a spirit of co-operation and trust among the partners in education. Education is a shared responsibility of the school board, the local school, the learner, the teachers, parents, the community and the Ministry of Education.

Through local autonomy, school boards strive to be responsive to community needs, but we must also be accountable for the educational programs and policies and for the funding of the education system. We must ensure competency for all learners by providing a variety of high quality education programs and at the same time being fiscally responsible, but we cannot do it alone.

Too often, any discussion of the problems of youth or inability of individuals to get jobs quickly leads to a criticism of schools for failing to provide the right kind of educational opportunities. Parents, business and industry must also play a role in fostering learning. We must provide direction to establish a productive working environment and develop trust among the various partners in education, whether they be trustees, teachers or the community.

Education is becoming the responsibility of a number of provincial ministries and co-ordination is essential to ensure that the best quality education responsive to social and community needs is assured and that there is consistency in goals and expectations among the various ministries.

Mr. Whitehead: My name is Bob Whitehead and I am presenting goal 6.

The public school system must celebrate and communicate its successes. We have much to celebrate. We must continue to communicate and celebrate our successes to raise public awareness of the good things the public education system has to offer. Too often, the focus is on what is wrong with the system instead of praising the things that are done right. We must celebrate the successes of all learners in the attainment of their personal goals, whether they are the students who achieve employment or the students who go on to post-secondary education.

The Ministry of Education has a role to play in the fostering of positive attitudes about the public education system. It must be viewed as the proponent of the system, publicly praising its good qualities and constructively offering suggestions for improvement to make a good system even better.

Mrs. Wright: We would be pleased to dialogue with the members of the committee.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. I have as questioners so far on the list, Ken Keyes, Cam Jackson and Doug Reycraft.

Mr. Keyes: I do not want the committee to look at the trustees in a harsh way. I tried to listen carefully to every word that was said and then tried to compare it back to our presentation yesterday by ministry officials as we looked at the history of education, the history of development of goals, the Hope commission, the Hall-Dennis report and so on.

I was trying to find somewhere in your presentation any sense of change of direction that you felt the educational system needs to take. I fail to find that. I felt that in everything you have said here, it simply emulated some, but not all, of the 13 goals of education as we looked at them yesterday from the ministry. You have looked at some of the technical aspects, talking about teacher training, retraining, evaluation, etc., and the responsibility with the partnership, but I just fail to grasp whether you felt there was a need for any change in the actual goals of education today over what we have seen for the last 20 or 30 years.

I guess I would throw it to any of you to answer the question, if you are sitting on a committee of this nature, as we will be for the next X number of months, trying to write a report and, as Walter Pitman says, having the chance to make an indelible mark on education in this country: What are some of the things that come to any one of your six minds that you feel you would want to see changed in the education system? You have all worked for a phenomenal number of years collectively on school boards. Where is the change? I did not see it in the presentation.

Mrs. Wright: I would like perhaps to start off, and then I certainly would encourage any member of the committee to voice his opinion as well.

I believe that boards of education have been very aware of an ongoing change. I believe that boards are constantly making changes in education. For instance, I noticed earlier this morning that it was passed that schools should perhaps be in operation for longer periods. Schools in Ontario are open 365 days of the year currently. Many of the schools house churches Sunday mornings. They house day care centres six days a week. They house community culture and recreation facilities. They open their doors to community dinners and dances on weekends. There are senior drop-in centres. Our schools are

becoming a lifelong educational facility for all people.

I believe that rather than look for an immediate change that we seem to want to make with education in this province, we should be looking at what boards are doing now. They are currently and consistently updating the educational facilities and services in this province. I believe that the goals of education that we have produced come from the 13 goals cited by the Hope commission back in the 1950s.

I think education is changing. There have been many good documents produced by the Ministry of Education. However, with the changes that are coming through, you cannot institute a change today and expect the students who are 15 years into their education to be the recipients of that benefit. It is an ongoing thing that is constantly getting better. We feel that the dropout situation today is much better than it was 50 years ago, when it was 60 per cent.

Mr. Radwanski would like us to go back. We are saying that you cannot go back. We are now in a situation where the dropout rate is 30 per cent, which we feel is a very real success for education in this province. We also feel that Ontario has one of the finest education systems anywhere in the world. We have statistics that prove that, perhaps not leading in all areas but certainly right up there ranking with the best of them. We are very proud of it and we just cannot see ripping education apart for the sake of change if change is not necessarily what we need. We do agree that there are areas that have to be streamlined and refined. We certainly look to this committee to help us, and us to help you, in that goal.

Mrs. Miller: I would like to add too, if I might, the fact that education is ever changing; I think we all understand that we live under that every day. But one of our concerns, and I think it is highlighted in this brief, is the fact that it is not a cure-all. We are having a great deal of difficulty trying to get some co-operation from the ministries. The new school spaces will have day care. We are into day care, which is not according to the Education Act, so we go right back and say: "Let's look at the Education Act. There are some problems there that we are trying to function under." That is one of our goals. Let's get rid of the horse-and-buggy legislation and start having a relevant act and regulations that we, as a school board, can live with and function under.

We are looking at English as a second language, which is a completely different educa-

tional component; it is very, very pricey. There is Bill 82. Each and every child in this province has a right to education. We are looking at health education, social education. Schools are now becoming all things to all people, and what we are saying to you is, if that is the direction this province is going in, please assure us that adequate funding is going to follow and that there is going to be some co-operation between the ministries.

We are concerned with the Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions renewal project. I have a daughter going into the Ontario academic courses with no curriculum. Some of it is not in place yet. We implement these changes, and the first group of children who go through do not receive what the children following receive. So if we are going to change education, as we do every day, let's be fair and do it up front instead of doing it after the fact.

1200

Mr. Campbell: We have mentioned, of course, accountability, Mr. Keyes. I know that is a buzzword, but in terms of your question, I believe that in the future, and maybe starting very soon, we must clearly articulate the learning outcomes that we expect in our students. This does not mean back to the basics, jam the information into them and test for what you have been jamming in, that kind of approach. But I think the learning outcomes, this aspect of it, need to be examined very closely. The students, and I am thinking mainly of the senior students in this context of the explanation, must be aware of what the teacher is trying to achieve with them as learners.

So in that sense, if we can gain the evaluation, the accountability, at least start in that direction, I think we will be achieving something.

Madam Chairman: Would any other member of the delegation care to comment?

Mrs. Hall: Perhaps I will. When we mentioned in our report that we felt the province should determine the high-quality core education that is provided, we were coming to that because we looked at what is core curriculum. We looked at all the traditional subject areas and then we looked at the varying abilities of students. We looked at the fact that we are serving students from the severely retarded to the academically gifted. What is a core curriculum area for a severely retarded student is far different to the area of a highly gifted student.

We feel that many people, many organizations will be coming and presenting to you here, and hopefully through this it will help you or the

ministry to determine what is relevant curriculum today. Twenty years ago, computer literacy was not relevant curriculum.

As commented earlier by the presenters who came here complaining that students were not computer-literate—the students they are receiving today may not be, but the students of tomorrow will be, because we do have computers throughout our system. We are encouraging computer literacy from elementary school on, so the students going into the workplace in the future will be computer-literate. Is that going to become part of our core curriculum?

I guess we are saying that if you are looking for change, perhaps that is an area to look at. What is truly relevant today?

Madam Chairman: I assume you were here when Mr. Pitman gave his presentation earlier.

Mrs. Hall: Yes.

Madam Chairman: I asked the question, "Do we have too high an expectation of our schools that they be all things to all people?" and I particularly referred to our very extensive curriculum. Mr. Pitman seemed to feel that it was not a matter of the curriculum's being overcrowded, as you have also pointed out on page 5, but more a matter of whether we are teaching what is relevant. He seemed to feel it could all fit in, but we really have to evaluate what is relevant.

Do you agree with this or do you think there are parts of the curriculum that really should not be covered by the school?

Mrs. Hall: I think the schools are expected to be all things to all people. One of the areas where we are saying there should be co-operation between ministries is on who should be providing what. If it is the school system, we have our five-hour instructional day. How much can we present in there?

I think as boards, we have to look at more integration of curriculum and helping our teachers. Perhaps documents need to be written that help our teachers to integrate subject areas more in order to adapt to the heavy influx that we have into the school day now in all areas. Perhaps there are things in there we have to look at seriously.

I know within our own board, we are looking at what we call the crowded curriculum within the elementary panel. There are certain things that we can do even at the local school level to withdraw the impingement on time that is occurring within the classroom, things like the public address system, that type of thing.

So in every area of our system, right up to the ministry, there are things that we have to

recognize and look at, and we are not ignoring it. Many of us are addressing it. There are possibly things there that we should not be covering, but we have to look at it thoroughly. We cannot just pick it out of a hat and say, "This should not be done."

Mrs. Miller: Who says that 9 until 3:30 is even appropriate learning? I think that the problem—and it is in here—goes back to the Education Act. The school boards are limited in educating our children. We keep having increased pressures from the outside saying that we must, we must, we must make sure these children learn all these skills and learn life skills, yet it is impossible.

Maybe we have to be more flexible. I challenge this committee to look at the educational year. Maybe there is a creative way we could extend the day, extend the year. Who says we need two months off in a year? Why not perhaps stagger the holidays?

If the ministry wants the school boards to teach more and more and more to their children and become, as was said before, all things to all people, then I suggest that we look at the school year and the school day to rectify a situation where we have kids on a six-day cycle. It is ludicrous. You just cannot cover everything, so something has to lose out.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Keyes, did you have any follow-up?

Mr. Keyes: No, I think I should pass. I appreciate the comments. When you talk about the utilization of the school, it is one of the things that I feel is not utilized anywhere near to the extent that it should be. You used some good examples, excellent ones, of what I believe it should be used for. I do not think you can say that across Ontario a majority percentage of schools are being used in that way.

I find school boards using all types of excuses, insurance, unionized help, etc., all these things, so that they do not utilize to the extent they should. I personally believe they should be much more of a community centre, a neighbourhood centre, and provide a much greater function and greater utilization of that resource on a much longer basis.

Mr. Mahoney: We are glad you passed there.

Mrs. Miller: We do not have very many community schools any more, though. We are not building community schools any more. If you have a community, it does not necessarily mean you have a building.

Mr. Keyes: That gets into the other side, which I do not know that you mentioned, the whole business of the architectural design of a building that is used for a school. It should be thought of as a building for utilization first, not as a school first.

Mrs. Miller: I welcome you to London where we are building a new one and it is very creative. It has a day care and it is planned as a community. I think you will find that is what is happening with the new schools that are being built now.

Mr. Keyes: Otherwise, if we had designed it differently, we would not have so many buildings that are no longer functional after the children leave the community.

Mr. Jackson: I would like to invite Mr. Keyes and the committee to come and visit the first community school built in Ontario, in my riding, Lord Elgin High School. It is just an exceptional facility. It is unfortunate that the community school movement did not flourish as we had once hoped it would.

On the point of community schools, I guess it is fair to say that even when I was a trustee, there was fear that if we compounded the usage of schools, for whatever reason, we hastened their depreciation. In the absence of appropriate replacement models and upgrading models for financing, a school board does that at its peril.

Our school board, for example, found itself in the position of having to come up with \$200,000 to repair a city-owned swimming pool with educational dollars and to cut out an academic program for grade 1 children. We were positioned into that because of this linkage with the community. We found ourselves in contracts with the municipality jointly, with the pool breaking down in one of our community schools, and yet no funding from the province. We just could not take it from the tax base because the breakdown occurred after the fact.

So school boards are a little reluctant, given the capital commitment for replacement of the very old buildings that were built during the baby boom which are now falling into disrepair. That was just an editorial comment.

Now to my question. Yesterday, Duncan Green talked about the three tensions in education. I would like to walk you through those three and ask you for a quick comment.

His first tension was, "Does education function to serve the individual or society's general needs?" Can we get a comment on that? Duncan did very well in giving us on the one hand and on the other hand. I am asking you to tell me which hand we should be looking at.

Mrs. Wright: The question was, "Does education serve the individual or societal needs?" Actually, it should serve the individual. The individual then serves the societal needs.

1210

Mr. Jackson: The second tension was that with the Hope report, we had a formalized monitoring system. We had the old, black hens, I used to call them, the inspectors that used to run around the province. I remember them sitting at the back of the room, scared the daylights out of me. I wonder how the teacher felt. They always wore black. That is the thing that unnerved me. But we seem to be swinging back to more of a provincial-based supervision and control versus the local. Could you comment on that tension?

Mrs. Wright: Local autonomy?

Mr. Jackson: Yes, the local autonomy versus centralist. There was a presentation yesterday which even made reference to other countries that were swinging back to that as a response to whatever, in a perceived educational need for reform. With the Radwanski report, we obviously are standing on a threshold waiting to determine if we are going to follow that path. He even referred to it as a pendulum. Do you feel we should be swinging that pendulum back? Should we be balancing it? Where do you think we should be looking in that area?

Mrs. Wright: Our association feels very strongly that local autonomy is where education should be. We have some real concerns that this province may be swinging away from local autonomy. We certainly are very supportive of the idea that each community has different needs, and who better knows the needs of the children in those communities than the local people, the people who are elected by the ratepayers to oversee their educational system? So we feel that the autonomy must remain in the hands of the locals.

Mrs. Miller: With a central drive, though.

Mr. Jackson: I understand what you are saying about curriculum. I want to get the other tension out of the way and then I want to ask you about curriculum, because curriculum is an area that concerns me, and I will deal with that in a moment.

Mr. Campbell made reference to the emphasis on learning outcomes. He probably has answered this question for you, but perhaps for the record, the third tension that Mr. Green referred to was the concept of, do we teach the child or do we teach the subject? Again, this is a pendulum question and we again in this province are being

challenged by that question by Mr. Radwanski. It sits at the core of where the goals in education really are. I believe Mr. Campbell did clarify that but, for the record, could you comment on that? Do we teach the child or do we teach the subject?

Mrs. Wright: As you are fully aware, in June there are a number of graduations that take place across the province from grade 8 students into grade 9 education. One of the interesting comments that was made at graduations was that secondary schools in this province do not at this time have little machines in the basement that turn out little Radwanskis.

We feel that all children have different needs and we must meet the needs of those individual students. Every student cannot learn the same way. We cannot give them the same materials to learn with. All children have different needs and what we are doing in this province at this time is finding out at a very early age what those needs are.

Now, those needs all change through the year and our teachers and our academic staff must be on top of these requirements so that when a child is through the elementary system and entering high school, he is basically channelled into the direction where his abilities lie. We cannot create a university-bound student with every child.

Mr. Jackson: I commend you for your comments on page 5 about the current teacher training system needing to be reviewed. Some of the very best teachers in this province cannot get into teachers' colleges. We will do volumes on this in the future, so I will leave it for the moment.

My final question has to do with curriculum review. I have concerns about how we approach curriculum. We take the whole damned curriculum in one big whack about every seven years and start to examine it in this province. I have always been nervous about it and I am most anxious to hear something more clear in terms of core.

We all understand what core means and yes, we want some more core definition. But can you as trustees, help us as to what you see coming out of Toronto in terms of curriculum review, what you put your teachers and your supervisory officers through, what in fact you put some of your students through in the way we approach curriculum review in this province?

Mrs. Miller: The problem with curriculum review in this province is that, as you said, it is sort of dumped, it is done, "OK, let's look at science, let's take it all and tear it apart, piece by piece." What we do in local boards, because we

do believe the most important part of education is the children—if we did not have the kids, it is all irrelevant and we would not have education—is we implement our own curriculum review and it is done on a continual basis.

You cannot review something every seven years because that is far too long; it has to be done in a continuum. Each subject should be evaluated each and every year. I think what you have to do is have it done by a large and a small board, by an urban, a rural, a northern board, and evaluate how that curriculum fits into the learning styles of those children.

I think it has to be done on a voluntary basis, but I think you have to do it every year and it has to be done on a complete renewal. One year you will do French and one year you will do English. With the change in French education, I think we will have to check to see if the children are learning their English properly. You are talking about illiterate children coming out of the school system. It is like a glass of water. When it reaches the top and then you suggest to us, "Oh yes, but you have to put in 40 minutes of French each and every day," where does that water go? You have to take something out of the glass to make sure that the water is in there.

The difficulty the school boards have is, let us help assist you in the evaluation but let us do it on a continuum basis so that we can see and learn quickly, not over seven years.

Mr. Reycraft: I will be very brief because both issues I wanted to question have been addressed briefly. The first is the overcrowded curriculum. I gather from what Mrs. Miller has said that given the fact we have a vessel of limited size and we have continued to pour liquid in without perhaps in some way expanding the ability to receive it, confronted with the two obvious options, either expanding the size of the vessel or restricting the amount we are trying to put in, OPSTA would support the former? You suggested things like lengthening the school day or the school year.

Mrs. Miller: That is not an OPSTA policy. The question asked was what we mean. What I am saying to you is maybe it is time that we evaluate it and look at the school year. If this committee decides that the education system is to mean all things to all people, then it is your decision to order the educational system, your decision to be a little more flexible.

Mr. Reycraft: Would you not agree that society, if it is going to continue to demand more and more of the system, is going in some way to

have to increase the ability of the system to deal with those additional expectations?

Mrs. Gardiner: I would like to respond to that because I think it directly refers to our goal 5, which stresses the need for trust and co-operation among all the partners in education. I think there are perhaps two ways to go. If society demands more from education, then perhaps education can continue to be more and more accommodating and provide more and more until we both expand the size of the vessel and also fill it with more material. Another alternative is for education to demand more of society.

I think that is the place where we have to perhaps establish a wider vessel that includes society and is not so restrictive, where perhaps associations such as the Retail Council of Canada would involve itself in education, where perhaps home and school associations would become involved in education, where ministries of education would co-operate and co-ordinate their efforts and see that perhaps society has a responsibility to assist in the education, in fostering this spirit of trust and co-operation among all the partners in education, where we do not just teach English in a 40-minute English class, where the concepts of communication are distributed right through the curriculum and outside of the school itself into the community, where we actively support volunteer organizations by having students do co-operative work with social service agencies and in business and industry and everyone gets into the act and people understand the goals of communication and become partners in it.

1220

Perhaps to respond too to Mr. Keyes's question, I think that is something that is new in education. Education is becoming more open. More people are becoming involved. The parents want to have a say in what their children learn and how they learn it. School boards, while protecting that local autonomy, feeling that we have a responsibility to provide direction, also feel we have a responsibility to be an inclusive community rather than an exclusive community, where we encourage delegations and encourage people from outside of the school system to become involved in curriculum review and curriculum implementation and curriculum evaluation.

I think that perhaps it does not have to be an either/or, when you talk about the tensions, that this particular goal does not stress the tension but stresses the co-operation and that we can have all of this. We do not have to make decisions about either/or.

Mrs. Miller: Children do not necessarily learn in the classroom. We have to start thinking more creatively about our learning environment. That is why I wanted to address our learning environment. It could be anything.

Mr. Reycraft: Indeed, I think the reality is that a small percentage of total knowledge is acquired in the classroom. I have forgotten the number, but it was provided to me at one time.

Mrs. Miller: A lot of it is learned around the dinner table.

Mr. Reycraft: And in many other locations. I appreciate the response. Mr. Pitman this morning suggested the family should be more involved than it is at the present time as well.

My other question deals with the matter of teacher training. Your submission calls for a review of the system, but it does not make any suggestions relative to changes. Has the Ontario Public School Trustees' Association studied this matter and does it have a position?

Mrs. Wright: Yes. We are in the process right now of developing a policy through OPSTA that we will be presenting to you on teacher training.

Mr. Reycraft: Good. Thank you.

Mrs. O'Neill: I would like to congratulate you, as I often do. Your association seems to be able to speak very clearly in very brief terms, and I appreciate that in the position I am in.

Mrs. Wright: Thank you.

Mrs. O'Neill: You put three words in your presentation that I want to commend you on, and I am very glad that Heather expounded on items 5 and 6, where co-operation is explained to us. She put that into Hansard in a way I hope we will reread, because I do think there were many alternatives just in her short remarks that we can look to for new ways to solve some of the problems.

A word I really like a lot is the word "trust." We do not hear it much in our society nowadays, because no one seems to want to trust anyone. Trust is based on, I think, improved information that a person gets and the resulting good communication that comes out of that better information. I think that with the kind of communication you have in your own association and you try to have among your boards and with your communities, that is possible, and I would continue to ask you to use that word. I think the education system can suffer from time to time by a lot of people continually criticizing and not trusting and always re-examining.

The other word I like a lot is the word "celebrate." I know many of your boards and

boards other than those that belong to your association are beginning to celebrate in their commencement efforts, and beyond that, achievements of students, whether they be small achievements, whether they be improvements of students, whether they be in going into the community. There is a lot more good PR, and I would again say, please continue to do that.

Mr. Lipischak is with us this morning and will be. He is the ministry official who is the liaison for this committee. He is also the person who is going to take and continue to take the challenge you left with us on evaluation, and that is our biggest challenge, our accountability. I think we are taking some very good steps in this new benchmark, or whatever people are calling the examination of subject areas, not one that pits board against board or teacher against teacher, but really does try to see whether that which we teach achieves that which we hoped it would achieve with the individual students. I hope you will be supportive of the efforts coming out of the ministry and Mr. Lipischak's administration and also keep us in touch with how that is working in your board. Thank you very much for your presentation.

Mrs. Wright: Could I just thank Mrs. O'Neill for her words? I believe boards of education are very sincere in their promotion of public

education. We are at the board level involving all aspects of the community. We are recognizing that we must get the word out to our communities and we are being very successful. I believe the grass-roots swell is going to prove to this committee, as well as to this province, that we do indeed have a very fine educational system in place. Not that we cannot do better, but we will strive with your help, and you with our help, that we will do better and we will come out with not only one of the best but the best. Thank you very much for having us here.

Madam Chairman: Thank you for your very eloquent and clear presentation this morning. We have enjoyed your comments and it is a pleasure to hear optimism and celebration. While that does not obligate any necessity to look and try to improve, at the same time, it does give us hope that there certainly are significant improvements in our education system and that is something we will continue to strive for. I would like to thank you again for coming.

The committee will now adjourn until two o'clock, at which time we have the Ontario Association of Education Administration Officials.

The committee recessed at 12:27 p.m.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The committee resumed at 2:04 p.m. in room 151.

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS
OF EDUCATION
(continued)

Madam Chairman: I will call this afternoon's session of the select committee on education to order. On the agenda this afternoon, as we continue our review of education philosophy and goals in Ontario, we will have before us the Ontario Association of Education Administrative Officials, followed by the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, followed up by the Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association.

We will begin with the Ontario Association of Education Administrative Officials. Mr. Grant, if you are here, would you like to bring the officials forward? After you are seated, could you please introduce yourselves for purposes of electronic Hansard. We look forward to your presentation.

Mr. Wells: Starting on the extreme right is Walter Willms, director of education for the city of Windsor, Jim Grant, superintendent of schools for the Brant County Board of Education, and Earl Lozon, director of education for the Kent County Roman Catholic Separate School Board. I am Allen Wells, director of education for the Lambton County Board of Education in the Sarnia area. Shall we begin?

Madam Chairman: Whenever you are ready, Mr. Wells. We usually suggest that perhaps half your time could be spent on your presentation to leave sufficient time for questions by the members, but you are free to garner your 45 minutes however you choose.

ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATION
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIALS

Mr. Wells: Very good. Thank you. I believe we will adhere to the schedule you expect. I see you have a paper we submitted and our intention is to touch orally upon the points covered there. If there are questions or any other area on which you wish comment, we would be pleased to do it.

We are happy to be here. We hope to see the committee again in the fall and winter when you meet to discuss the other items of interest, but essentially this afternoon we are talking about educational philosophy and the goals of education.

"Philosophy" is a fairly major and heavy word. In the average library, there are many books on philosophy and there are even many books on philosophy of education, so to a great extent we have drawn from that the philosophy of education that appears to lie behind the goals of education as they have been enunciated in Ontario.

As an association, the Ontario Association of Education Administrative Officials is made up largely of superintendents of schools and central office supervisory staff in the public and separate schools of Ontario. It is fairly hard to arrive at such a position without having faced the question, "What is your philosophy of education?" Speaking personally, I recall it as being one of the early questions asked some 14 years ago when I became a superintendent. It is a question on which we tend to reflect.

We have appended to this a sample of a personal philosophy of education that was written almost 10 years ago by one of the members of our committee, Walter Willms of Windsor. It is only a personal philosophy that has the power to affect our actions, and I felt this was a better way to demonstrate the kinds of philosophy of education that are current in Ontario as opposed to one produced by a committee. While each of us will have differing philosophies at different times and within any group there will be differing positions held, on the whole the culture dictates the philosophy we have adopted. To a degree, this does represent the philosophy of OAEAO.

I will ask Mr. Lozon to discuss the next section of our brief.

Mr. Lozon: Thank you, Mr. Wells. Madam Chairman and members of the committee, you will note at the top of page 3 of our submission we state, "The goals of education are the stated hopes that serve to bring philosophy to life." The goals we are making reference to are the 13 goals that were introduced by Dr. Bette Stephenson, then Minister of Education, during the 1979-80 school year. They have been repeated many times over the past years, and also in the Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions document when it was published in 1984.

We might point out that these goals of education possibly have higher acceptance among educators than maybe they do in society as a whole. We believe that is the result of educators utilizing these goals in their everyday

instruction, as well as curriculum development and implementation, so therefore it would result in the internalizing of these goals on the part of the educational community.

1410

I will not repeat specifically or read the 13 goals of education, because I am sure you are certainly well aware of those. What I would like to do is share some specific views on how we, as educators, see them, more specifically in relation to our roles.

It is our hope to instill or develop in youngsters these particular philosophical perspectives that we see in the form of goals. One of the things we consider most important is that youngsters have to feel good about education. In order to feel good about education, education has to be meaningful and interesting to the students. Therefore, it is an objective of the school community to make school an interesting place and help kids feel good about it.

Communication is another particular goal, one where we, as an educational community, have received a great deal of criticism; that is the area of communication in the form of basic skills: reading, writing, the ability to communicate through numbers, etc. We do hold that as a very high goal and one that is attainable, and we believe the curriculum today does reflect that and should continue to do so.

Another area is that of a healthy individual. We believe the school system has an obligation to develop skills and practices in youngsters that will allow them to lead healthy lives. We believe society as a whole will benefit from that sort of thing, mainly because of the large number of dollars that are being spent by all levels of government in relation to this.

Another area is positive self-image. We feel the educational system has a responsibility to make kids feel good about themselves, and our curriculum must reflect that. Without this positive self-concept, they will not be effective members of society.

We see appreciation of the arts, both the performing and visual arts, as being an important component. We see the family as being an important component, realizing today that family takes many forms. It is up to our schools and curriculum to provide the atmosphere in which family, as it stands today, can be accepted and appreciated.

Life skills: Again, we see the school system as being the place where the future life skills of the individual can and should be developed in order

that he can lead a productive and fruitful life, beyond just the workplace.

Citizenship: We believe we have an obligation as a school system to develop the concept of citizenship. In fact, we see an even broader goal in the sense that we should be developing strongly the concept of Canadian citizenship.

The concept of multiculturalism: In our Canadian society—certainly we all realize it is a multicultural society—we believe the school is one of the ideal places where we can promote and develop this particular attitude and concept.

Work ethic: I think this is another area where we often are criticized by the community at large, about the work ethic of the youngster who is leaving school today, and sometimes even the work ethic of the individual during the course of his school life. We believe it is important that youngsters develop this work ethic and that our programs reflect opportunities for them to develop it.

Also, there is the aspect of nature and the environment. We feel the environment is more threatened today than it ever has been in the past. I think it is quite obvious. Certainly, I think the course of the summer we have gone through is indicative of many people blaming man for the problems that are existing right now.

Another point is the spiritual end. We really see the school and the programs as a source of developing the spiritual needs and aspirations of the individual students. For some, it might be developing just the ability of getting to know themselves internally, personally, or maybe even a broader religious belief that we find in the Catholic school systems.

Again, I could elaborate on these, but we really feel these particular goals of education, presented in very simple terms as I have tried to do for you now, are extremely important. In 1979 and 1980, when they were introduced, we saw them as important. The educational community has tried to internalize these. Today we see them as being every bit as important and we feel that we have to have programs that reflect these goals, because these goals do really reflect the common philosophy that we hold in our society.

I will turn the next section over to Jim Grant.

Mr. Grant: It is somewhat difficult, and perhaps even hazardous, to speculate on what someone's philosophy was, particularly pertaining to the goals of education, when they were written some time ago. However, we have attempted to speculate on what that philosophy was that formed these goals. I think our speculation is based not only on time but also on

experience, particularly in terms of experiences as school administrators and educators.

As Mr. Lozon pointed out, we are characterizing goals in our presentation as the hopes or aspirations or desired outcomes that serve to bring philosophy to light. I guess one would have to say it begs a question: what should these desired outcomes be?

When considering the goals of education and looking at them individually, and I hope you will bear with me as I do this, one of the most important things, we feel, is that students, regardless of age, should enjoy learning and should derive sufficient satisfaction from the process of learning to cause them to be lifelong learners. In order to do that, we have a responsibility to make sure that their learning experiences are varied and interesting. As a result, it is up to our schools to develop a responsiveness so that learning becomes a dynamic process.

I mentioned earlier that we look at learning as lifelong. It is also open-ended, not with specific terminal points, and it also leads to an unknown future. It would be wonderful if we all knew what students who are leaving grade 8 this year are going to need to know in the year 2004 when most of them will be 30 years of age. We do not know that, but we do know that we have to develop within our students resourcefulness, particularly adaptability—because we are talking now, according to the futurists, of as many as five to seven different careers during a lifetime—and also creativity in learning and living.

To do that, communication is and will continue to be basic to life and to learning. In order to communicate effectively and to express one's ideas well, one needs a basic level of education. We feel the philosophy behind the goal of acquiring the basic skills needed to comprehend and express ideas is that a basic education is going to be the minimum required. Basic education at one time was grade 8. Today, it is at least a secondary school diploma. I would caution you to note that we are not indicating any particular time line on attaining that secondary school diploma.

1420

Goal 4 of education addresses physical fitness and good health. We believe the philosophy behind this is the long-held ideal of a sound mind in a sound body contributing to human happiness. It is not just the mind that we as educators have to be concerned with. Now at present, as I am sure you are aware, there are those who have put forward considerable debate regarding this

very goal. For example, should we have compulsory physical education all day, every day? That debate continues on.

Goal 5 stresses that students should gain satisfaction from participating, and from sharing in the participation of others, in various forms of artistic expression. This has been an area that has been somewhat, and I qualify this, neglected over the years. We feel it is a very important area. Unfortunately, it is an area that sometimes suffers. I think, for example, of the effect of schools movements that have happened, particularly in the United States. It would appear more often than not that the arts suffer in favour of more English, more math, etc. We feel that the goals of education need to be adhered to in this particular area because, if not, they could tend to get neglected and lack emphasis.

Goal 6 is developing a feeling of self-worth. This is critical from the time a student enters school, either in kindergarten or grade 1, and throughout that student's lifelong learning process. In our society, much good flows from self-accepting persons, those who know themselves and those who are able to accept themselves for what they are and what they can be.

Goal 7 is developing an understanding of the role of the individual and the family. We feel that the family unit is absolutely critical to the future of our society.

Goal 8 is that self-reliance is a worthy attribute. Those of us in education have often heard, particularly over the last four or five years, that it would be wonderful if we could develop our students to be self-directed problem solvers. We would concur. However, much discussion does need to take place concerning the type and development needs of these skills, with particular reference to the role of the school in doing that.

Goal 9 is that community involvement is both important and enriching and has a spinoff in many of the other goals already mentioned.

Goal 10 is developing esteem for the customs, cultures and beliefs of a wide variety of societal groups. We would like to think that the present attitudes in society will keep this feeling towards the value of multiculturalism in perpetuity. We would not like to see this slip at all.

Goal 11 stresses the value of work. We feel that Canadian citizens should understand the demands of a life of work, appreciate them and regard such a life as constructive in Canada.

As Mr. Lozon pointed out, the 12th goal is develop respect for the environment and a

commitment to the wise use of resources. This too is critical. Canadians should learn to live with nature rather than try to conquer it. As a result of trying to conquer it, there are all kinds of repercussions, which is something again where we are in an area of the unknown.

Goal 13 deals with the acceptance of multiculturalism and various religions. This implies the acceptance of a range of religious practices among citizens. It is our feeling that the public system needs to value these equally, while separate school students need to understand other religions with respect.

That is basically the philosophy that we see behind these goals as stated by the ministry. At this time, I would like to call on Mr. Willms.

Mr. Willms: If we might continue our presentation in terms of some other summaries or statements of beliefs or philosophies that we think are important as we address the goals of education, I want to proceed with what we have written, starting on page 9.

Certainly so far our comments have been basically on philosophy as we understand it, as we have observed it to be, as we perceive it to be, underlying the 13 goals of education as they have been articulated for the province.

First, just as learning is lifelong, we believe that the structure and the organization of schooling, of the educational process, too must provide for a lifelong process.

Second, we believe that schooling must represent the whole of childhood, and other agencies or services in society have responsibility as well. Society cannot depend on schools alone to meet all our educational expectations.

Third, we recognize that schooling is provided in a very complex and uncertain world. We are constantly barraged with changes in technological areas. We are facing changes in the tremendous expansion of knowledge of all kinds. Thus, education must liberate each child, each person, to become more than any one person can imagine.

Fourth, we recognize that schooling must provide for both breadth and depth of understanding. Citizens are called upon to make decisions that affect varying areas of life, and they are called upon to make decisions that require depth of understanding, breadth of experience and well-developed competencies in many areas.

Fifth, as much of our presentation has already indicated, we believe that schooling must pay attention to social concerns. It is not enough to address only intellectual pursuits. It is not

enough to prepare students only for the world of work, but we must do so within the context of social issues that are facing you and me every day of our lives.

Sixth, we recognize that there is a reality that schooling cannot be provided without attention to fiscal restraints. Therefore, the goals that we articulate must be attainable within a finite range of human and material resources, depending on the priority and the emphasis that society is prepared to exercise in the provision of material resources.

Seventh, we recognize that there are natural conflicts, there are differences of opinion, there are natural tensions in the articulation of philosophies. We believe that these differences of opinion or some disparities, as they might be perceived to be, motivate all educators. Differences are dealt with by using a variety of strategies, by employing a variety of organizations, by allowing teachers to proceed in a way that is peculiar and particular to the style of each teacher to motivate students as they move from grade to grade. We believe that there is no one ideal philosophy, no one ideal purpose that can be exercised in a school system representing a very multicultural society and in a world that is constantly changing.

A looseness of organization and expectation to the degree that it exists means that the schooling experience and the goals it is designed to meet may be offered to each pupil as an opportunity rather than as a guarantee. We stress words such as "leading" and "making possible," rather than "ensuring." In an evolving world we suggest such an attitude towards schools, towards what schools are able to do, will give pupils the opportunity to do even greater things in the future than is so today. The goal of merely preserving the best practices of the present, already attained, is a less promising one.

The students in our schools are now preparing to move into a new century, into a new world, which they themselves will construct and organize, a world that they will lead, and education must offer them everything we can give them. We must embrace them, we must enhance learning opportunities so that they will be ready for the new century.

This ends our prepared presentation, and certainly all of us will be ready to answer questions the best we may.

Madam Chairman: Thank you for your presentation today.

Mr. Keyes: I have just one question to Mr. Willms. The whole presentation has taken the goals and stated them twice, once in simplified language and then a philosophy behind them. I want to talk about the last comment you made in your brief, and then I had a quick moment to extract one sentence, which I have taken somewhat out of context, but you might elaborate on, from your own presentation which you wrote seven years ago.

You said that "Education must concern itself with today and need not create panic and uncertainty by trying to teach for an unknown tomorrow." I would like you to elaborate on that because, in what you just finished saying, you said we must prepare the students for the 21st century. Your own statement of seven years ago seems to be somewhat contradictory in saying education must concern itself with today, not with tomorrow. I wonder if you have changed your philosophy slightly from seven years ago.

Mr. Willms: Certainly philosophy is an emerging and a changing thing, but in the paper that I wrote seven years ago that we have appended here what I tried to emphasize was the stability, the confidence that we can provide students today, that we could provide seven years ago; the confidence, the assurance that we can give students today which will enable them to meet the world, however it will be in the next century. It is the stability for today that I tried to emphasize, to provide confidence and to be ready to accept whatever the world might be.

Mr. Keyes: What would you consider the main attributes of stability to be? I have not had a chance to read your presentation, but that one leapt out at me.

Mr. Willms: There are some competencies that must be developed, there are some skills that must be taught, both intellectually and practically, and there are attitudes that need to be developed.

Mr. Jackson: Gentlemen, I appreciate your presentation very much. It is cogent and succinct. However, I have a couple of questions I would like to ask. On page 7, item 7, you talk about the family. You raise more questions than answer questions with that highlight, recognizing the equality of opportunity challenges that we have in defining the family in educational terms, and then talking about the other element of it, which is family support services with the redefined family, stating that the ideal has yet to be worked out completely.

There have been some questions raised by this committee about education being a great social

equalizer. I know you make reference to egalitarian versus elitist, which are the two extremes. But in the context of this objective, in terms of understanding family challenges, when a growing number of children in this province have more complex and different family structures, how can we, as a school system, react to that without becoming a social agency, in effect an extension of certain social services?

Do you have more that you can add to that or did you intentionally leave a lot of questions outstanding about it, or have you formulated opinions about what has probably been the most radical change of all elements in a child's life in the last four years, the makeup of the family?

Mr. Wells: I will begin. We agree, although we have not discussed it, that family support is not an educational concern in large measure, but there are things that can go on in school—pure counselling measures and so on—which recognize that at periods of transition in the family structures, the school can certainly help the individual child.

What we did do was recognize a dilemma, as you have pointed out, and raised more questions than were answered. Our whole philosophy of the makeup of Canada is that it is composed of families; yet we have the reality of families disappearing. So school has to be aware that there is a difference between reality and the ideal, and yet strive to derive for children, from whatever experience, the qualities of understanding and support that the family would have provided. In large measure, we look to agencies other than the school to meet the problems that families encounter.

Mr. Jackson: That is the part that is giving me the most difficulty. Of all your presentation—we could be here all day—I want to focus right in on that one point, if I can, because I have had 10 years' experience dealing with early-school-leaving programs and alternative programs. I believe in your report you make reference to alternative education which, as you know, has been primarily to accelerate school exit with an enriched program as opposed to retaining the potential dropout.

The other point I want to share with you is that, by and large, there are a large number of school dropouts who are experiencing certain family difficulties that manifest themselves in a variety of ways but end up being problems in school. They end up being dropout candidates or early-school-leaving candidates. That is why I am concerned or interested, I guess.

As the chief executive officers of school boards, I was hoping that you might be able to give us more of a definitive response in terms of the relationship of the complex family structures and its impact on schools, as opposed to what I believe I just heard you say, which is that it cannot be connected in all instances and that we may have to rely on outside agencies for a lot of those things.

Yet the evidence keeps pulling us more and more to the view that the school board does have a role in terms of ensuring that difficulties at home are somehow dealt with because, in the absence of catching them, there will be negative elements to their school life.

Mr. Wells: OK. I believe that others may wish to respond. I can say that the responsibility we accept, as chief executive officers and as superintendents of schools, is that we be aware of community resources that in our private lives we may very well be involved in. I would be surprised if superintendents were not involved in all sorts of support services related to the social fabric of their communities.

There are adjustments which teachers can be taught to make. Teachers are often the first line of determining a need for an adjustment and a seeking out of resources. So the school does take on a diagnostic role but it does not tend to take on a curative role. It tends to seek specialist help from other agencies. There are other people on the panel.

Mr. Grant: I would just like to add to what Dr. Wells said by saying that I think, informally, teachers do play a role in situations such as you are referring to, Mr. Jackson. I think they are very sensitive to this. But that does tend to diminish as the education of the youngster progresses and the size of the school gets larger.

Mr. Jackson: I know what you are saying. I will not raise it now. I will pass at the moment.

Madam Chairman: All right. Then we will go to Mr. Mahoney and Mrs. O'Neill.

1440

Mr. Mahoney: I was interested in a comment you made about developing a work ethic. Frankly, I am personally a little concerned that the work ethic is not nearly as strong in the students coming out of school as it was maybe 20 or 25 years ago. By adopting the philosophy that has been adopted in education, which has been expanded upon by every group that has come before us so far, that every child is special, every child is different and every child should have an individual program really tailored towards his

interests and abilities, I wonder, almost thinking out loud, if we are not making it too easy, if we are not going away from the stated goal of developing a work ethic in an attempt to have that particular individual find his niche. I am not saying we are; I am wondering if that is a possibility and if you have given that any thought.

Mr. Grant: Since I raised it, I would like to respond, if I may. I think back to 23 years ago when I graduated from high school. I guess I had a work ethic, but I wonder what it was towards: memorizing, memorizing, memorizing to pass nine departmentals; wondering whether we were going to have the frog on the biology exam that year or the worm. I guess that is work.

Mr. Mahoney: That is scary stuff, though.

Mr. Grant: It never did me—well, I will not go into that.

I think students do have to work very hard. I think there are a great many pressures put on our secondary school students to work hard. I find that to be the case in secondary students whom I talk to. I am not going to comment on how hard they are working at the elementary level, because I think you are referring more to the upper end rather than the lower end and getting into university and any post-secondary institution.

Mr. Mahoney: Although in many ways the work ethic will be developed at a much younger age, I think.

Mr. Grant: Right. One could get into a number of things here pertaining to a work ethic. I would just comment that in my experiences as a secondary teacher, department head and eventually principal as well, I think there is a great deal of work. In fact, I would reiterate what was said by one of our trustees at a board meeting that I attended recently, "Does all a kid have to do any more to get credits is work hard?" I think that is quite enough myself, to work hard and do well. To get through, I think they do have to work hard.

Mr. Mahoney: Before you respond, Mr. Jackson this morning used the term "pendulum." I think that is a good example here. This is a pendulum question too. I guess my question is, in trying to develop that work ethic, are we swinging the pendulum too far towards the individual programs and is that pendulum making it too easy? I tend to agree with many of your comments, but—

Mr. Willms: I wish to respond briefly to your statement regarding the individualization of programs. Certainly, in our presentation and in

our paper, we have stressed the importance of the individual: respect for the dignity, respect for the ability and respect for the challenges that each individual faces.

We have in our paper, in one of the attachments I believe, made the statement that individualization occurs not so much in the delivery of program as it occurs in the expectations of the responses of the individual, the achievement levels, the abilities of the individuals.

Certainly, in education, as in other aspects of life, we function in groups. The delivery of program in schools occurs in groups, but there is an individual expectation as to what can be achieved and what should be achieved, and I believe it does not result in a diminishing of the expected efforts of individuals. In fact, there may be some individuals of whom we have expected too much and pushed them too hard, but there are also individuals whom we have not sufficiently challenged. It is the expectation of the achievement of the individual that we want to give priority to.

Mr. Mahoney: I was interested in the analysis of the goals, the first one in particular, where the statement was made that the first goal should be to "develop a responsiveness to the dynamic process of learning." Then, when you read where it says "A Translation," it says "enjoy learning." I tend to think that is the nub of the whole issue, if we could somehow create an atmosphere where our young people could really enjoy school, not just enjoy learning, because there is a lot more to school than learning.

Mr. Jackson: And they cannot fail. That is the catch-22.

Mr. Mahoney: That is right, but I think if they could enjoy what they were doing, it is like all the fun we have around here. If we enjoy what we are doing, we do a better job at it. Right?

Mr. D. S. Cooke: What happened to the work ethic? That is not fun.

Mr. Mahoney: Sure it is. I did have another question, though. That was just by way of comment. Work can be a lot of fun if you happen to enjoy what you are doing.

There have also been a lot of references by each group to the fact that education cannot take place just in the school and should involve the family. There was a comment earlier about many young people who have school problems, where when you trace it back you find they had family problems. Have you ever thought about which is the chicken and which is the egg? Do the school

problems beget family problems which beget school problems?

Mr. Grant: If I may respond, I could say: do school problems cause family problems, do financial problems cause family problems, do extramarital problems cause family problems? Why school problems causing family problems? Why have you focused on school problems causing family problems when there are all these other factors that could have caused family problems?

Mr. Mahoney: Fine. This is a great generalization and we are talking in those terms in these hearings, but a lot of times if a child is doing well at school, his parents in many cases are very pleased with him. I just wonder if there is a little stronger relationship there and if we should be involving the parents more in education than we are.

Mr. Willms: If I may respond, I would say you do have a point and there are instances. I remember the dedication of the year-book when I graduated, "To our parents, who see in us their second chance."

Quite often, parents visualize their children as the successful people they would have become if fate had not intervened. When that starts to fade too it may produce a lot of tension between the husband and wife as to what is the cause for this and so on. But I would have to say that based on people I know, families for which I am not responsible, it would not make up a large percentage of the causes of family problems; yet it is certainly an instance that could be observed in any town of Canada.

Mr. Mahoney: Thanks for interpreting.

Madam Chairman: I notice that we are almost out of time, but Mrs. O'Neill has been waiting very patiently. Perhaps she could ask a very brief question.

Mrs. O'Neill: I hope most people have their TV sets tuned in today because almost every Ontarian thinks people like you and people like us are on holiday.

Mr. Jackson: We are. If you love your job, every day is a holiday.

Mrs. O'Neill: I want to commend you. I have always admired your association because it does represent the two public school systems and I think it is a very admirable goal that you have managed to pull that together and learn from each other throughout the years. I understand you are preparing for an exciting convention in October and I hope that is a success.

There is one concern I had. I was very surprised. It popped right off the page on page 7 when you talk about "self-reliance is a worthwhile attribute," and beneath that you say: "On the whole, this is one of the less-agreed-upon philosophical positions. Courses and units on life skills have been postulated for a decade."

We had the retailers in this morning. I think they would have been very interested in this. They brought to us some grave concerns from their perspective. I am concerned too if somehow or other this has not been able to be focused upon. I had a feeling there were a lot of good life skills programs out there. I hoped they were not reserved only for people with behavioural problems, which you somehow intimate, or maybe I am misreading. Could you say a little more about this?

1450

Mr. Wells: I will start again. Mr. Jackson referred to the fact that in alternative schools the tendency is to polish up and finish off in a hurry what we would have done if we had more time because they are going to leave anyway, and so life skills becomes a major part of most alternative schools. There are good life skills programs, and each of these gentlemen could speak to them as they exist in their own systems, but there was at one time an expectation that there would be a life skills course, or perhaps five of them, and each year we would learn a different set of useful skills needed by a citizen. That is the area where I suggest the controversy has occurred. That has been abandoned as far as I know and units are to be incorporated in different courses throughout the high school experience where they are appropriate.

I think that is all I can say. There are people who see life skills as being extremely valuable parts of education and others who see them as being the natural concomitant of simply a good education, that a person who is able to solve problems can solve problems when the wallpaper starts to slip or can solve problems when the can opener is not grabbing on the tin and does not need a special course in wallpapering and can opening. That was what was in mind with that statement.

Mr. Willms: Our task as supervisory officers, and I am sure your task as a legislative committee, would be much simplified if we had to satisfy only the retailers, or if we had to satisfy only the social agencies in the province or if we have to satisfy only the desires of the universities. If we could focus our attention on any one of those elements only, we could quickly devise an

educational system that I think would much better satisfy that one particular group, but we have to satisfy all of them, and you do. Therefore, we do give importance to this whole characteristic of independence and self-reliance because it is common to all the client groups that we must satisfy in education.

Mrs. O'Neill: I guess that is why I am concerned that somehow or other we have not yet, from your perspective, really dealt with that; at least that is what crops up here.

Mr. Jackson: I am glad Mrs. O'Neill went back to that because that is the very point I was trying to make. We have both been involved in self-reliant models, both for advancement and for retention of dropouts, to ensure that they have part-time school experience and part-time leave, so that they have those opportunities. I sense from your own set of criteria that we have not as an educational system determined the role of the family in the educational process as well as the classroom role that the family plays. Those were the two elements I thought were missing in terms of clarity.

I understand that education has become a major battleground, and you, quite rightly so, wish not to be in the vanguard of reforming models for equality of opportunity. We are talking about the status of women, and we get right into what the textbooks tell us about the models for women in society. Maybe you are not supposed to be in the vanguard of that and you are not to be held accountable if you do not wish to be, but I was hoping we might get a more clear statement about the redefinition of the goals in education moving in that area, because personally, based on over a decade in public education, I feel that is a very important element of it.

In terms of the average dropout and the kids who are not making it in the system, that is really a lot about what we are here to discuss. That is why I noted Mrs. O'Neill's point about life skills and self-reliance. I am pleased it is there, but I was hoping it was a more weighted factor. We did not get a more definitive statement from you on the family role and the self-reliance element; just acknowledging them, that they were out there. We need a little more help with that. Otherwise, you are going to end up with our decision and that is not always palatable.

Madam Chairman: Thank you for coming and making your presentation before our committee today. I know certainly Mr. Grant's comments via the dissection of the frog or the worm in the exam hit home for at least a few of us. We will be looking back to our own education

and saying maybe there is a bit of a rose-tinted glass to it and maybe a little more nostalgia and it might make us think a little bit more about that. Anyway, thank you for coming today.

Our next presentation will be by the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association. Welcome, Mr. Cooney. Would you like to introduce your delegates.

Mr. Knott: I will start by correcting you. I am Doug Knott, deputy general secretary. Mr. Cooney is not with us. Just to bring up who the people here are, Mike Haugh is at the far end of the table on the left. There is Paul Howard, who is an executive assistant with the OECTA, with duties primarily in collective bargaining. He is also an expert in the professional development of secondary school teachers, having formerly been principal of Pope John Paul II secondary school in the northeast corner of Scarborough. Beside him is Emile Timmermans, who is a councillor on our provincial executive. Emile has been teaching for 25 years, every grade from grade 5 to grade 13, and is currently a home instruction teacher in the special services branch of the Metropolitan separate school board.

To make the presentation is our second vice-president, Mike Haugh. Mike is also vice-principal of St. Anne Catholic secondary school in Tecumseh in the county of Essex. That has a student population of 1,635 in a school that was built for 1,000, and it has 24 portables. Mr. Haugh has also been a department head of English and has many years of experience in education as well. Mr. Haugh will make the presentation on our behalf.

ONTARIO ENGLISH CATHOLIC TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Mr. Haugh: It is a pleasure to be here. Like most educators, I enjoy, even on my holidays, the opportunity to discuss education with a wide range of people.

Initially, we would like to make some remarks pertinent to the goals of education found in the Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions guidelines, in the Ministry of Education guidelines. From there, we will have some brief remarks on those goals applied to the separate school system. Finally, there will be some very brief consideration whether or not a revision is necessary to those goals and how that might be effected.

Perhaps before even getting into that, I would refer you to the table of contents in our submission. You might be somewhat perplexed, given the terms of reference for these hearings, to

see the second, third and fourth topics contained within a presentation dealing with the philosophy of education. I hope, succinctly, I can convince you, in going through this presentation, that they are indeed appropriate topics. I assure you without reservation that they are concerns of our association and the Catholic teachers in this province.

As the previous presenters indicated, the 13 goals of education, by and large, are things that I would trust do not need to be reiterated to any person in this room. We do note that since their inception a short number of years ago—that being a revision of those developed in 1937—they appear to function quite adequately with a great deal of success in our educational systems.

We would, at the same time, agree with what we suspect might be your view, which should be self-evident, that there is a constant need for an assessment of the means of implementation and the delivery of those goals through educational systems in this province, particularly given the fact, as we note, that our province is pluralistic, multicultural and bilingual.

The next point we would stress is that the nature of the goals, with good purpose, is that they are framed in generality, the concept being that, as goals should be, they set out the broad parameters of what objectives are desirable. The specificity comes in at a board level, as you are all aware. Our experience has been, within the context of our system of philosophy of education and our practice of it, that the goals of the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward) and the ministry are not inconsistent in the least bit.

1500

We have found, as well, that we have had little difficulty in implementing those goals quite successfully. They are appropriate, again, to our system of education. We find that sort of collaboration to be a natural and harmonious process. We would go further to say that, upon examination of those ministry goals, we find no contradiction to citing some statements with regard to Catholic education, specifically on page 3. The type of thing we are very much concerned with in the delivery of education philosophy is well set out in the quotations on that page.

I quote from *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 1988: "The religious questioning of young people today needs to be better understood. Many of them are asking about the value of science and technology when everything could end in a nuclear holocaust; they look at how modern civilization

floods the world with material goods, beautiful and useful as these may be, and they wonder whether the purpose of life is really to possess many 'things' or whether there may not be something far more valuable; they are deeply disturbed by the injustice which divides the free and the rich from the poor and the oppressed."

I quote further and state that in our view: "(The school's) task is fundamentally a synthesis of culture and faith and a synthesis of faith and life: The first is reached by integrating all the different aspects of human knowledge through the subjects taught in the light of the Gospel, the second in the growth of virtues characteristic of the Christian."

There are a number of examples which specifically speak to the success of the development of the goals of education in separate school courses of study in the fields of guidance, geography, and most recently acquired immune deficiency syndrome education.

Perhaps as an aside within that context, we would draw your attention to Mr. Radwanski's call for much more specific ministry goals. We feel that would indeed be counterproductive and stultifying from a separate school perspective. We believe that, given the tradition of harmony and development in concert with ministry goals that has been present in our system since approximately 1840, that would be inappropriate.

We also believe strongly that, even more so, it would be inappropriate to reach a degree of specificity which, in large part, could remove from local autonomy the provision of and the recognition of the community aspect and the authority of boards of trustees in developing systems of education and programs that are appropriate to local needs.

With regard to a possible revision, as I have stated already, in our view, by and large, things are working well with respect to the goals of education. We find little difficulty, as Catholic educators, in implementing those goals.

We do note on page 5 a moot point perhaps with regard to the proportion of goals of education and what they address themselves to; specifically there the individual's obligation to contribute to society, the needs of the state versus personal fulfilment. I am given to understand that Mr. Green, speaking this morning, cited that as one of the three paradigms that function in terms of tension within the education enterprise. We would certainly agree with him.

I have a couple of final comments with respect to this particular aspect in looking specifically at

a couple of the goals of education, with the sincere hope of dispelling what perhaps are still commonly held misconceptions with regard to the philosophy and practice of separate school education in this province on the part of many people.

With respect to the 10th goal, to "develop esteem for the customs, cultures and beliefs of a wide variety of societal groups," I think I am correct in stating that I heard the previous group of presenters express its sincere hope that it would indeed be the case in separate schools that an understanding, a knowledge and a respect for other religions is part of the instruction. I can assure you that is indeed the case, from firsthand knowledge, having evaluated a number of classrooms where that type of instruction in world religions is taking place with those aims or goals in mind.

Similarly, and I guess the crux of the matter, the linchpin for us, deals with number 13; I trust there is no significance in the numbering of that or that type of thing: "develop values related to personal, ethical, or religious beliefs and to the common welfare of society." I would quote there from the publication of the Institute for Catholic Education, which, as you may know, is a group which involves not only the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association but also the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Ontario Separate School Trustees' Association and the Catholic Education Foundation of Ontario, to wit:

"Moral development in the school depends in part on a consideration of ethical principles and religious beliefs, a respect for the ideals held by others and the identification of personal and societal values.

"It is one of the formal tasks of a school, as an institution for education, to draw out the ethical dimension for the precise purpose of arousing the individual's inner spiritual dynamism and to aid his achieving that moral freedom which complements the psychological. Behind this moral freedom, however, stand those absolute values which alone give meaning and value to human life. This has to be said because the tendency to adopt present-day values as a yardstick is not absent even in the educational world. The danger is always to react to passing, superficial ideas and to lose sight of the much deeper needs of the contemporary world."

I would suggest that, in essence, encapsulates the problem before you, and certainly us on a daily basis: find out what we should be doing and why we should be doing it.

From there I would like to move into the other areas that I alluded to earlier and briefly explain why these, in our view, are concrete manifestations of our philosophy of education and how we practise it.

Certainly the aspect of religious education in our schools is the thing which characterizes them, personifies them. In that respect, in terms of the qualification of suitable instructors for that, for some time now, with the assistance and acknowledgement of the Ministry of Education and in concert with the Ontario Separate School Trustees' Association, we have run a three-part series of religious education programs across the province. This year we have 18 different centres and there are 1,300 teachers involved in the enterprise. I think I am safe in saying that over the years we have had a number of members in our association, which stands presently at 27,000, who have had the commitment and have taken the opportunity to further their knowledge of their faith and the methodology for imparting that in the classrooms of our schools.

None the less, we do have a serious concern with respect to this. There remains a significant disparity between growing needs and responsibilities of those teachers and the teacher preparation program in faculties of education. It is one thing to hold the philosophy, it is another to practise it; and if the means are not present, the practice of the philosophy becomes, I would suggest, little more than ideology.

Our difficulty with respect to religious education and the qualification of individuals in faculties of education, to put it very succinctly—since the documentation and more detailed explanation are before you in our brief—is, in essence, that under regulation 269 of the Education Act, specifically schedule A which delineates “teachable courses,” religion is the one exception that you will not find on that list.

Now that is a seeming paradox, given the fact that the Ministry of Education has seen fit to grant credit status for grade 9 and 10 education. This is outlined, of course, in the Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Program and Diploma Requirements 1984, pages 32 and 33.

1510

In concert with the decision taken in 1986 for the completion of the separate school system and the recognition of the constitutional validity of that system in this province, certainly we now have a “full, comprehensive and complete secondary system,” of which religious instruc-

tion as the *raison d'être* of our existence is an integral part.

None the less, we find ourselves again in the quandary where our teachers effectively are barred from pursuing that as their discipline, their teachable subject, in the faculty of education. We would suggest that in all probability this has been an oversight within the context of the recent amendments to the Education Act enacted in the provisions of Bill 30.

In essence, then, there flows from that another consideration with regard to the courses themselves and the granting of credit. Here again, the Catholic educational community, under the aegis of ICE, the Institute for Catholic Education, has developed a number of religious education guidelines and is embarked on the process at this point in time—indeed has been for a bit of time now—in reaching a consensus with respect to its recommendations to the Ministry of Education regarding the granting of credit status for religious education.

Again, one flows from the other. If the teacher is to be qualified, it would seem logical that there will be courses that require the teacher. Again, I cannot emphasize, nor should I need to I believe, that is an integral part of our system, our philosophy of education.

As such, the Roman Catholic educational community is requesting the immediate amendment of regulation 269 to provide for the inclusion of religious education in schedule A. This is viewed as a necessary step for the complete educational program that comprises the separate school system.

I would note as well that the board of governors of the Ontario Teachers' Federation has, by formal resolution, given its support to this request. I would also point out that in 1976, in a brief to cabinet, they stated the following:

“Programs in teacher education institutions must...accommodate the special needs of those candidates who will be entering the separate school system, in terms of religious and moral education. The individual characteristics and priorities of separate schools are legitimate areas of inquiry for a substantial proportion of student teachers, and should be provided for in the preparation process.”

As you can tell from that, there has been recognition for some time of the necessity for this, and we are requesting the support of the committee today to bring forward this recommendation to the Ministry of Education.

I move into the next topic in our brief, which deals with the issue of separate school represen-

tation within the confines of the Ministry of Education. I think, if you consider for a moment the extent of the separate school system in this province, the number of not only teachers but also parents, ratepayers and students involved in that enterprise and committed to it, you would agree that again logic would seem to dictate there would be proportionate representation within the regional offices of the ministry, and especially within the Mowat Block. I suspect that a scrupulous analysis of statistics would demonstrate that such is not the case, for whatever reason.

In any event, we all know that we have a finite bank of resources, both financial and human, from which we can draw in providing the most effective educational system in this province. I would suggest to you that part of that bank has been locked up in a safety deposit box for some time and at this time, with the expansion of the separate school system, with the amount of expertise and experience and the need for liaison, it would be appropriate for this to be a consideration of this committee, perhaps for some recommendations or personnel suggestions to go forward to the Ministry of Education to take advantage of the expertise available.

The final topic I would like to discuss, since I have been told I have a tendency to ramble at times, is the question of educational finance. I am going to be very succinct and blunt about that. Our chief concern deals with the recommendations of the Macdonald commission, most specifically with the question of the pooling of commercial and industrial assessment, and as should be patently obvious, with the question of equity in educational financing in this province.

To paraphrase Gertrude Stein, a student is a student is a student. We pride ourselves, in philosophy, on being a democratic society that provides equity to everybody in the society. None the less, in practice, being human and fallible, we fall short of that on occasion. I suggest to you that it has been a long-standing occasion in the Catholic educational community.

I do not think I need to get into specifics with regard to accommodation or various other matters of that ilk. I think we are all familiar with that and with some of the difficulties we are all attempting to grapple with at this point.

I direct your attention to page 27 in our brief regarding financing of separate school education and I will read into the record the recommendations made by the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association with regard to the Com-

mission on the Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education in Ontario.

1. The increase to 60 per cent of the provincial government's level of support for the cost of elementary and secondary education.

I will expand briefly on that. Approximately 15 years ago, this province was funding expenditures for education at the level of 60 per cent. Today, it is at a level of 47 per cent. In the same breath we are sitting here—certainly you are sitting here—hearing about the philosophy of education: what needs to be done, why it should be done; and coming soon, indeed, perhaps how it should be done.

It is one thing to say something; it is another thing to do it. At the same time we are being told of the importance and relevance of education to this society, particularly moving into the next century, and particularly with the changes in society in terms of science and technology and the information explosion, it seems incongruous, to state it gently, that the level of support for the educational enterprise has declined by approximately one per cent a year for approximately 15 years.

2. The establishment of more reasonable grant ceilings for recognized ordinary expenditures in order to provide equal educational opportunity.

I will not elaborate on this because the background information is a fairly clear explication of the intent within the context of the brief.

3. The equalization of all residential assessment for use in the calculation of apportionment and the provincial grant.

4. The taxing of all commercial and industrial assessment by the province at a rate so as to retain the accepted 85 per cent to 100 per cent residential to commercial differential and the distribution of the yield on the basis of the average daily enrolment weighted by the board's grant weighting factor. I will speak more on that in a moment.

5. The guarantee by statute—those are the operative words—of the distribution of industrial and commercial assessment recovered by the province for educational purposes.

6. The continued use of grant weighting factors with annual amendment.

7. The phasing out of block grants by incorporating the sum into the existing grant system.

8. The construction and renovation of separate schools for secondary school purposes according to secondary school specifications with appropriate funding.

I know this is perhaps radically different from what you have heard so far in the presentations, and again I reiterate the point that philosophy becomes ideology; it is meaningless unless it is put into action. Being by nature a pragmatist, how you put things into action in this world is you adequately fund them.

One thing that I did say I would speak further to is the question of the apportionment of the pooled assessment. I believe the recommendation was initially made that this be in the same proportion as the residential and farm assessments of the respective boards; i.e., the coterminous boards. We would disagree with that and say that it appears eminently logical to us that a proportionate disbursement of those moneys, again the pooled commercial-industrial assessment, would more logically be done on a proportionate basis according to average daily enrolment in the respective systems. How many clients are there for you to provide your service to? How much does it cost per client? Voila, that is how much it costs to achieve that.

1520

We would also stress that we strongly endorse the principle of equity in educational funding; and again I come back to the question of proportionate funding, the pooling of assessment. A student is a student is a student in this province.

I think at this point—I would hope anyway—I have had an opportunity to outline the essence of our philosophy and those concerns we have about the things that we feel very strongly are necessary to implement that philosophy successfully in terms of the separate school system of public education within this province.

I would like to conclude by thanking you for the opportunity to come forward on behalf of the association and to address our concerns. At this time, we would certainly be pleased to entertain any questions or concerns that you have.

Madam Chairman: We will now open up the floor for questions.

Mr. Jackson: It is a very interesting brief, covering a wide range of topics. I guess I am fascinated by the reference to the quota system for the Ministry of Education. That is the first time I have ever heard of that. Are you referring—it would be an unfair question, so I will not ask it, but I will leave it with you.

Mr. Haugh: If I may interject, I believe I did not refer to a quota system. I did refer to the fact that logic would seem to dictate, again in the

interest of equity, some sort of a proportionate representation.

Mr. Jackson: Did you not indicate that you were specifically aware of the inequity?

Mr. Haugh: Very much so.

Mr. Jackson: Quite frankly, over the last three years I have watched the careful consideration by the government of having a minister and a parliamentary assistant who had experienced both systems. I do not expect the Liberals want to comment but I did not see it as a major problem. I guess the unfair question would be, do you feel that a Catholic educator or someone who has been a Catholic is a requirement to have a civil service position? Is that what you were seeking? I am sorry, I just find this whole approach somewhat awkward.

Mr. Haugh: I think that is a fair question.

Mr. Jackson: I did not even hear it during Bill 30 and that was a year and a half of my whole life here.

Mr. Haugh: I think the easiest response or the clearest response is simply this: There are a number of Catholics teaching in the public educational system; they do not have separate school experience and, believe me, having spent a number of years in that line of work, it is an experience.

Mr. Jackson: But were not a lot of them taught in the separate system?

Mr. Haugh: That is quite possible. I, myself, was taught through elementary and secondary school in the public system.

Mr. Jackson: As I say, I would rather leave it. I just find the whole thing fascinating and perhaps not even productive to pursue. However, what I would like to pursue is one of the reasons I had requested that we try to deal with the philosophy and goals in education as the first function of this committee, because every one or two decades, from the evidence we have seen, we seem to pause and reflect on where we feel as a society, if we can freeze-frame, where we are going to go in terms of what we believe education should achieve for our children and for our society generally.

The major event to occur in the last five years was full funding for separate schools and therefore there is somewhat of a responsibility for this committee to examine what that means. Are we developing two public systems, two parallel systems? Where it surfaces is in recommendation 13 on page 9. I am pleased that you referred to it because I think it is very key.

If we, as a committee, are to redraft the goals in education for this province, it raises the first and most significant question: Are there two sets of goals for students in this province, whether they are attending the public system or the separate public system? Is it possible for us to deal with that? I see serious reservations among boards for embracing the notion that our role is to instil certain religious beliefs or even moral sensitivities. I have even come across boards that are having difficulty with that.

Mr. Haugh: I apologize for this, but I do have a tendency, being a former English teacher, to use a great deal of analogy and that type of thing. The analogy I would employ here, I suppose, although it makes me more of a cartographer, would be that of a road map. You may have a particular destination, but there are many routes to get there.

To be a bit more specific in addressing the question you have posed, I do not think there are different goals of education. I think that since education is a provincial matter, there are provincial goals for education. The fact that there are different routes to get there and different degrees to which those routes are pursued in one fashion or another, in no way detracts from the fact that those goals, as I have stated, stand very well for students in this province.

Mr. Jackson: With recommendation 13, obviously, you will be very disappointed if Ontario fails to make a statement with respect to ensuring that the goals of public education in this province have little to state about the development of moral values and an appreciation for certain religious beliefs. Can you go so far as to state you will be disappointed if that is not included?

Mr. Haugh: I will state categorically that I would, indeed, be very much disappointed, not just as a Catholic educator but as an educator.

Mr. Jackson: All right. Quite frankly, I do not disagree with you. While I was a trustee, on our aims and objectives I had injected the specific clause about the moral sensitivity necessary for children to operate within a society as they grow. I feel very strongly about that. I do not wish to impose that on the committee hearings but, quite frankly, I think if part of our process will be to develop a new set of goals as they relate to what a child can expect in this province, and therefore what a parent expects the system to do for that child—whether it be individually based or the other—I just wanted, for the record, to make it abundantly clear that you are looking for some

clearer statement than perhaps has existed in the past.

Whether you want to refer to it as a pendulum that is moving more in this direction or whether it is the duality of our educational system and somehow we have to address that, I do not know how we will fine-tune it, but I certainly want it on the record as to the importance and weight you place a that in the goals for education as provided by your system.

Mr. Haugh: There is no doubt about that. I would be inclined to say that rather than that particular issue being a pendulum, it is pendulous, in that, despite the concern within the Ministry of Education, indeed the educational community in this province, about values education—that is a generic term for it—we have yet to see, I think, the degree of development that many educators and certainly many parents are looking forward to seeing.

Mr. Jackson: I do not wish to become particularly controversial at this point. You are the first representatives of the separate system to come before us and we will be raising serious questions. But I have concerns about how we now, in the late 1980s and obviously preparing for the 1990s, have to reorient some of our thinking in terms of what happens to the educational system.

What brings most to my mind where this conflict between the two systems arose was Bill 7 and its impact on section 263 of the Education Act, the role for teachers per se and the opportunities that administrators and boards have to enforce various standards within school boards.

1530

We appear to have emerging a bit of disagreement as to how far the state can go and how far the educational system should be preserving a part of one of two systems in this province. I think that example, in and of itself, has some concern and we are going to have to deal with that. I just wondered whether, from the point of view as a teacher, you have any comments about what impact, if any, that is going to have.

Mr. Haugh: I believe that with respect, again, to that tension between the individual and society or the state, the obvious function in our system of society, our system of government, is to pursue the course of action you are embarked on right now, to try to make some very hard decisions about what is going to be appropriate and what direction that society should be heading in. Within that context, I believe we are very

fortunate. I am speaking as a teacher. In terms of my employment, we have a great deal of latitude to function, as professionals, to assist in reaching those goals of education that duly elected government has decided in its wisdom are appropriate for this province.

I would not for a moment disagree with you that this is something which is not going to go away. Regardless of what deliberations are held and what decisions are made, I think this is something that is always going to be with us. Actually, I think that is a rather healthy type of tension to have to deal with because it causes us to look very carefully at that question on an ongoing basis.

Mr. Jackson: It is the fourth tension. When I reiterated Mr. Green's three points this morning during the hearings, I also felt he missed three others, one of which is the one we have just been discussing. I consider that one of the tensions which clearly we, as a committee, are going to have to deal with; and we will be, it is on our agenda for perhaps next year or two years from now. But it does have an impact on what we, as legislators, state is the philosophy of education now that we have two systems. I think we are going to have to deal with it. I appreciate your points, at least up to point 13 on page 9. They will be extremely helpful on that point.

Madam Chairman: We have approximately a little less than 10 minutes left in the presentation and we have Mr. Reycraft and then Mrs. O'Neill on the list.

Mr. Reycraft: Others who have appeared before us have talked about the fact that society's expectations of the educational system have changed over recent years, that they have grown, and that as a result new demands are now being placed on the system and that it is increasingly difficult for educators to meet those demands. The phrase "the crowded curriculum" comes up again and again. I am interested in OECTA's attitude to that.

Mr. Haugh: Ironically enough, yesterday I had an opportunity to attend one of our religion courses in Hanover, in the Bruce-Grey separate system, and the same sort of question was posed to me, albeit more along the lines of: "Quite candidly, how do we get these people off our backs? With the curriculum documents, we are just being swamped in the classroom with these things, being buried in that ocean of paper that we have seen moving down the corridor on television."

That is one aspect of the difficulty. I think, more pertinently, what you are referring to is the

idea that since education is to be for everybody, it should be everything to everybody. We would agree with that to a certain extent, but the extent would not, I suspect, go beyond that expressed by the previous group of presenters. Logically, pragmatically, we cannot be everything to everybody. We can have concern for everybody as an individual, and that is indeed within the context of our religion and our practice of educational philosophy.

I think the gentleman who spoke to the question previously hit the nail right on the head in saying the best we can hope to do with the finite amount of financial and human resources we have is to act as effectively as possible as a clearinghouse, a reference point, to the other agencies that exist within our society, which have the specific training and expertise to deal with the specific types of problems.

There is no doubt that our society is changing, and I think many of us would concur with the idea that part of the change in society is, unfortunately, often breeding a situation where parents, in terms of the education of their children, raising their families, are throwing their hands up and saying: "What do I do? There are so many things going on and so many things to consider. To whom do I turn to for assistance?"

The natural place to turn, of course, is the school, the educators; but again, they cannot be all things to all people. That again, I suspect, is part of the mandate and responsibility of this select committee, and certainly of the government and the politicians within this province as leaders within this province: to assist in deciding, upon consultation, what is appropriate.

Mr. Reycraft: But in expanding the system, in expecting more of it, do you not believe there is a danger that we may be dispersing our resources over too broad an area and that the education of young people, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy, may be adversely affected by trying to do additional things with the system?

Mr. Haugh: In general, I would agree with that, and that would most likely be a common conception. None the less, I would suggest that it is not so much a matter of throwing additional items of lading on to the cargo ship as it is one of disembarking some of that and changing the cargo, and that is something that I think requires a great deal of consultation, a great deal of forethought and some very prudent exercise of administrative capabilities. I stated a couple of times that it is patently obvious that resources are

finite and that there has to be the most judicious use of them.

Mr. Reycraft: I have one other question on the credits for religious education within the secondary system. I realize that you are restricted to one in each of years 1 and 2. Is religious education being taught in years 3 and 4 as well?

Mr. Haugh: The present situation is that it is being taught and credits are being obtained under the guidelines for social studies, physical health and education and family studies; and this practice is recognized, given the course content. Again, I would suggest it is a situation such that the methodology certainly is not what you might expect if people were to say, "Is it religious education?" Yes, it is, within the context, legitimately, of the content set out within those ministry guidelines in those areas of study.

What we are suggesting very strongly is that it would be more rational—quite frankly, more up front, given that it is the backbone, the underpinning of our system—to say, "Yes, it is religious instruction; and yes, you can achieve a credit in this," than to say, "Yes, it is physical education" and bring in the other dimension to it.

There are some difficulties that are chiefly administrative difficulties with respect to the impact of that type of action on the other subject areas because of the extant situation, which more simply means that if we have a number of people on the staff of my school—shall we say, two of the social science department—who "specialize" in teaching that particular course, and it is then moved to upfront religious education and taught by an individual who has been given the opportunity to become certified as a religious education teacher in a separate school, then certainly there are impacts that have to be felt in other areas within the curriculum. But again, I think those are largely administrative impacts and are largely at the point of local decision within the school of what is going to be appropriate as a program within that school and that community.

1540

Mr. Reycraft: Did I understand you to say at the beginning that you are already teaching religious education at four grade levels instead of two?

Mr. Haugh: Yes, I said that, and I said it in the same context I would say without reservation that we make no secret of the fact that in our system of education—and there again is the essential difference from the public, nondenomi-

national system—religious values permeate our instruction.

Mr. Reycraft: If you are already doing it, why is it necessary to change the Ministry of Education guideline to authorize it?

Mr. Haugh: It is not authorized at this point in time with respect to a credit being granted as religious education as opposed to some other area of study.

Mr. Reycraft: So when you say it is being done now, did you mean on a noncredit basis?

Mr. Haugh: That is correct.

Mr. Reycraft: I understand.

Mrs. O'Neill: Mr. Haugh, I have seen the courses you are describing, and several members of this committee who have background in education, and even those who do not, I think would find it very helpful to see some of the course descriptions of the subject area you are talking about in grades 11 and 12. I think it would help people understand what appears like a dichotomy but really is not.

Mr. Haugh: Yes.

Mrs. O'Neill: OK. Mine is a very short question. With respect to number 3 under your financing, I thought Bill 100, which has just recently passed in the Legislature, attended to that. Am I incorrect or is there something more? We are phasing that in, but I thought we had dealt with the equalization of all residential assessment in that bill.

Mr. Haugh: That is correct. I suppose I should clarify. I may have given you a misconception here that we are coming forward today recommending to this committee that it pursue action on these things. In some cases, as you quite correctly note, action has already been taken on this thing.

Mrs. O'Neill: That is good to know. I just wondered if there was another dimension we had not attended to.

Madam Chairman: Do you have any other questions, Mrs. O'Neill?

Mrs. O'Neill: No, I found the answers to our questions quite complete.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. I would like to thank the members of OECTA for appearing before us today. We shall certainly consider the points you have made today carefully.

Mr. Haugh: Thank you very much. It has been a pleasure.

Madam Chairman: Our final delegation today is from the Ontario Catholic Supervisory

Officers' Association. Mr. Reilly, would you come forward and introduce the members of your association?

ONTARIO CATHOLIC SUPERVISORY OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

Mr. Ferren: I would like to introduce Tom Reilly, who is the associate director of the Dufferin-Peel Roman Catholic Separate School Board and executive director of the Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association. I am Peter Ferren. I am the vice-president of the Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association and I am director of education for the Welland County separate school board.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Ferren. You might like to leave approximately half of your allotted time for questions at the end. As I have mentioned with the other delegations, you are free to allot your time however you wish, but we usually do have a number of questions, if you would keep that in mind.

Mr. Ferren: We will try to do that and we will be rotating our presentation between Tom and myself.

We appreciate the opportunity to express a few thoughts on educational philosophy from the viewpoint of the Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association. In our brief, we have tried to steer clear of detail and we are concentrating on the philosophical basis. We felt the detail would come in the implementation stage and in the second stage of the hearings in the fall, and we will be making a presentation at that time also. With that, we will begin.

In the first two sections, I will address the meaning of education and the nature of a philosophy of education.

We are defining education in this submission as referring to the total effect on individuals of the experiences they gain in an organized school system. We are indicating here that this is a significant influence, a significant effect on the individual from the experiences gained during that formal educational period, but that it is far from the total impact and total effect on the formation of the individual persons. Such an organized education system cannot be responsible for all aspects of the formation of individuals, or even for all aspects of any part of such formation; yet we recognize that it does have a significant influence on the individuals.

We would submit that the other parts of the whole, in terms of influence, fall on the parents, and in the area of religion as far as our particular system is concerned, and there are other influ-

ences at work. We feel that the influence of parents is and ought to be of much greater importance. We recognize that parents are the primary educators. In a separate school system, we would wish the influence of religion to be more significant as well.

We recognize that there are other powerful and perhaps less wholesome influences coming to bear on individuals in society. I think we need cite only the example of the impact that TV has on individuals, the message of consumerism that we are all bombarded with. Certainly, young people are growing up in that atmosphere; and that is an atmosphere of consume and use, perhaps even to the point of reckless abandon, I think. We could point to the impact of that particular philosophy of consumerism and its detrimental effects on our environment.

If I may turn to the nature of a philosophy of education, we are stating in our brief that any philosophy of education at best is a contingent philosophy, because a philosophy of education is dependent upon a philosophy of life. Such ultimate questions have been variously posed and categorized, and for the purposes of our paper, we are going to deal with them under three concepts.

The first is the nature and the purpose of the individual human being. I suppose the questions under that particular concept would be: Who am I? Why am I? Why do I exist?

The second concept would be the relationship of that individual to society: How do I carry out that purpose in relation to the community in which I live, the narrower communities of the home and of the particular municipality; and the wider communities of the province, the country and, indeed, the world?

The third concept is the relationship of that individual to God: How do I carry out those purposes in relationship to God?

We are aware that the choice and expression of these categories imply major assumptions. The totality of these assumptions is, we would claim, a basic faith which is nonarguable. Such a faith, in one form or another, is possessed and acted upon by all individuals and groups regardless of their religious affiliation, and it is the basis of any philosophy of life and hence of any philosophy of education.

Mr. Reilly: If I could pick up from there, the next part of the paper really attempts to set out what is the Roman Catholic faith and, therefore, the basis of an education that we would support.

We believe the individual is made in the likeness of God, possesses free will and really

has been given talents, whatever they are, to use in the service of others and for the glory of God, not for self-aggrandizement. That is summed up, as Christ said, in the commandment to love God and your neighbour as yourself.

1550

Within a social context, therefore, the individual is part of a community. He has to recognize that, and the community and the individual have to be balanced. That is quite a change from the philosophy of the Enlightenment that has been popular for so many years and that perhaps peaked in the 1950s and 1960s when the individual became all important. That is not a Catholic position.

The individual is important and was put here for important purposes, but is important in a context and that context is society. So the development of the individual's talent is for the individual, but ultimately for the service of others. You have to blend self-actualization and community actualization, and within that there are imperatives regarding the stewardship of the world we have been given. There are limits on individual ambition and individual action.

Finally, the individual is placed here to have a relationship with God. Everything else the individual is and does has to be viewed in terms of the quality of that relationship. In our eyes and in our faith, that relationship overrides all other relationships. In the final analysis, the affairs of this world matter less than that relationship and, indeed, they matter only as expressions of that relationship.

We would see economic development, academic success and social success as all being important, there is no gainsaying that; but they are really important in terms of using Jesus Christ as a model. The social fabric that is created has to be measured against the vision set out by Jesus Christ. A very important point is that we do not argue for one second or one millisecond that we live that model or succeed in capturing that model, but it is the ultimate priority, as we see it, to capture that model and to live that model.

Mr. Ferren: Perhaps I could move to the next section, the uses of education.

We see education as a social institution and as a social good designed to deliberately influence formation. Increasingly so, this formation is recognized as a lifelong process, just as for Catholics their pilgrimage of faith is lifelong. We recognize that there will be legitimate disagreement about how such a powerful instrument as education is to be used. This is especially true in our society where there is no prevailing world

view or no consensus on what constitutes the good, except within very broad parameters.

Not only will the goals of education vary with the philosophy espoused by different groups, but they will vary with the circumstances of any given era as the anxieties of the population shift for a variety of reasons. We know that in the 1960s, which Mr. Reilly has already referred to, there was emphasis on the individual, as noted by the Hall-Dennis report in the late 1960s. In the 1980s, we are dealing, I suppose, with economic man; the emphasis is on the economically valuable person.

We accept it as a fact of life that education by its very nature cannot be neutral. To be meaningful, it must have a purpose, and it is legitimate that to some degree the purpose change from time to time with the exigencies of the age.

In the provision of education, we recognize education as a good. Our society obviously recognizes that when we look at the amount of resources we give to education. It has been a fundamental premise in Ontario for many years that equal educational opportunity should be equitable across socioeconomic classes, geographic regions and types of schools. Current thinking would go even further and declare that equitable educational outcomes must be assured, as espoused in the Radwanski report.

I guess it is a fundamental question as to whether such a position is necessary. Many societies, as we are noting here, have survived and prospered with elitist systems. We could choose to put the majority of our resources into those who can achieve at the top level and not put as many resources for the rest of the population. We do not believe in that, but that is a choice that could be made.

We would urge the select committee vigorously to support equality of educational attainment as the philosophical position to be adopted, and further to press for its early implementation.

Mr. Reilly: From those premises then, we see certain outlines or bases for a philosophy of education for Ontario. I will say at this point that I do not think these differ very much from what already exists, but any philosophy of education in a province such as this has to recognize a diversity of culture, religion, demography and philosophy. It should recognize the importance of the total development of the individual, but recognize that many people see that development in the kind of context in which we see it; that is, in relationship with society and with God. It does not rule out others, but that should be there.

The philosophical basis must be broad enough to support differences not only in emphasis from time to time but in some fundamental priorities, such as that one. There should be a balance. Philosophy should emphasize that all aspects of the individual have to be addressed.

Indeed, some bounds should be stated. We cannot accept an emphasis which is counter to the Human Rights Code, the laws of the land, the social norms we do agree upon. We have had cases in Alberta where people were teaching what society generally would say was fundamentally untrue, and that has to be ruled out.

I think an attempt has to be made to ensure all-round development of the individual. The emphasis this decade may be on high technology. Who knows what it will be in the next decade? I think room has to be left for the all-round development.

Economic prosperity and social cohesion are important. Success and equality of life are also important; so the philosophy should not just be in terms of benefits to be derived in a tangible sense but benefits to be derived in an intangible sense by the individual.

There should be room for exploration of profound issues. In other words, it should not be a superficial philosophy of education.

The last point would be that it really should emphasize equity, not pay lipservice to it.

Mr. Ferren: This or any philosophical position would imply a vision of an ideal state. This vision, of course, is going to be blurred by a multitude of philosophies that may be in play at any given time.

We would put forward the separate school vision of the learner ready for the world. We would see this learner as a person who has developed an interest in lifelong learning, a person who will have acquired the knowledge and skills appropriate for future employment of a personally and socially beneficial nature. He or she will have developed those talents which had bestowed upon him or her and have been the beneficiary of wholesome experiences in the areas of spirituality, aesthetics, academics and physical activity.

This person would be an inquirer and a problem-solver who has learned to live with ambiguity and change. This formation would have included preparation for dealing with the larger problems of peace, global security and social justice in a very meaningful way. This individual would be conscious of the need for social responsibility and effective stewardship with regard to people and the environment,

would be aware of the fine balance between community needs and individual rights and would willingly choose the common good over personal convenience or aggrandizement. This learner would acknowledge his or her place in a world as a creature whose first function was to acknowledge dependence, to forge a relationship with God and to live a life in conformity with the divine will.

1600

In conclusion, the Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association would recommend to the select committee that it conceive of a philosophy of education in very broad terms in keeping with the nature of our society; that it recognize the limited influence of education, which we spoke about earlier, taken in the narrow sense, and set its expectations accordingly; that it allow for the constitutional right of the separate schools to nourish an educational position somewhat distinct from the current mainstream of our culture; that it recognize in some matters of societal demand—for example, for work readiness—that emphasis will vary over time and that these are not really philosophical issues, except in the sense that change is endemic to the human condition; and that it, above all, reiterate Ontario's philosophical commitment to a free education and equal opportunity for all.

Mr. Reilly: Although we promised that was the conclusion, perhaps I could just allude to the paper that was appended from Hamilton-Wentworth. We have avoided the nitty-gritty because that will come later, but there are two or three points there.

In that paper, on the first page, item 2, they emphasize the importance of parents. Within our system, that is something that we fundamentally believe. We may not always act perfectly upon it, but we certainly fundamentally believe it. On the second page they make the point that the 13 goals of education for Ontario are still valid. I think we would support that position, that those goals are valid. The working out of those goals, the bit that you will be struggling with next and we struggle with daily, is extremely difficult, but they have validity. On the third page they talk about the crowded curriculum, which we had alluded to earlier. There is no question that right now we have only one kind of shovel and that seems to be to shovel in. We maybe need a shovel to shovel out as well.

Finally, a point addressing failure: Failure in our society is something which is emphasized by a lack of applause. We all feel it at times, and children in school no doubt feel it. The emphasis,

as it says here, really is not upon whether children will be successful or not successful but upon our finding ways of meeting the difficulties of students in school and adults in our society and using the powerful weapon of education to help them rather than stamp them.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Reilly and Mr. Ferren. I will now open it up to questions from the members.

Mr. Reyecraft: I just happened to look at one of the lines under the "Further Comments" section of the Hamilton-Wentworth submission and I wonder if I could just comment on it. It is the one that says, "Day care must never be treated as schooling." I am thinking of the Radwanski recommendation about expanding education downward to children at a younger age. Is the comment in here related to that in any way? Is it a reaction to that?

Mr. Ferren: I will start. Tom may wish to comment on it too, Mr. Reyecraft.

It was not developed in relation to this brief, but I think it is related to what we have already said. As day care is beginning to expand in a major way and we expect it will continue to expand, we think it is important that a fundamental philosophy towards day care be established at the beginning and that it not accumulate a lot of baggage as it goes along. We do not think it should be part of the formal schooling process, and we are relating back to the influence of the formal education system on the individual. We think there is a significant influence played by the parents and a significant influence played in our particular system by religion, and there are the influences of the other factors. Probably our bias may be for the social skills that need to be developed at that particular age and the exposure to a variety of experiences which prepare the young learner. For formal reading, for example, I think we look for the same type of influence that we would see played by the role of the parent in terms of providing the young person with experiences, not to provide formal reading, if I could pick that one particular area.

Mr. Reilly: To put it bluntly, if Mr. Radwanski means shift the school system down one year further, we would be "agin it," because I think young children would be suffering from battle fatigue by the time they reached so-called grade 1.

Mr. Jackson: A Sesame Street junkie at home already from too much Big Bird.

Mr. Reyecraft: I find the position somewhat interesting, given the fact that across the

province, particularly in rural areas, it is the separate school boards that have sort of led the way in junior kindergarten.

Mr. Reilly: Two different things, if I could comment on that. We are not saying that the school system should not even become involved in organizing day care. What we are saying is, do not slip into the trap of just making it more school. We have to fundamentally think through what we are doing in day care and provide the kinds of experiences suited to very young children, some of whom are extremely immature. In your first few years of development, all of us who have brought families up know you make quantum leaps from age zero to age one. It is miraculous what happens. If we kept learning at that rate, we would end up as Rolls Royces. It is very important what happens there; and we are saying think it through, do not just make it more of the same.

Mr. Ferren: I think, in relation to that, when we are talking about junior kindergartens, to which you referred, where the separate school system made the initial beginnings in a major way across the province, the purpose of those junior kindergartens in the early years was the socializing aspect. I think there has been pressure to push the system further down. We are opposed to that.

Mr. Mahoney: Before I ask my question, I have a comment on your statement on page 4—I think, Mr. Reilly, you read it—where you said, "In the 1960s, in a society preoccupied with individualism, education was slanted towards...the free expression and flowering of the individual."

I went to a Catholic boarding school and lived with the priests. There was not too much free expression and flowering of too many individuals. Maybe that should be the 1970s, rather than the 1960s.

Interjection: OK.

Mr. Mahoney: You walked on eggs. Much of the discussion—

Interjection:

Mr. Mahoney: What did he say?

Mr. Jackson: Educators' mistakes come back as trustees or politicians.

Mr. Mahoney: You got it. That is for sure.

We talked about competition between the two publicly funded systems yesterday I guess it was. I asked if there were concerns about the competition and concerns particularly about the apparent increase in private schools. Whether it has been true in the 1970s and 1980s as much as it

was in the 1960s when I went to school, the feeling has always been that the separate school provided substantially more direction, more spiritual guidance and more discipline than the public system. That discussion came up and, I think, was one of the differences, if it is not still.

Having three kids who have gone through both systems and are still going through, I still see that difference: that strength, a little more discipline. I just wonder how you feel about the competition. We heard a presentation about pooling, which I know the public school people are extremely concerned about. I saw their representatives smiling at Reilly in the back of the room when the issue was brought forward.

We have financial competition, we have competition of issues dealing with curriculum, discipline and the spiritual and cultural aspects of what we are trying to turn out of the system. And then we have the private schools flourishing. I wonder: (1) if either one of you gentlemen has had an opportunity in your respective boards to analyse the concern about the increase in private schools; and (2) how you feel about competing head to head, both financially and from an educational point of view, with the public board.

1610

Mr. Ferren: I will make a few comments on our particular position in relation to our neighbouring board. As director, anyway, and in the position of trying to influence what the trustees do, I really do not become overly concerned with that issue of competition or becoming involved in a campaign to attract students to our system because of what we are doing. I believe that we should devote our energies and our resources to providing the best program possible and let it speak for itself.

I realize the concerns are there and I realize it is a real issue. I guess at this particular point in time it is more of an issue for the public school system because of the shift of pupils to the separate school system, which compounds the declining enrolment that has been taking place for a few years. I have not become overly concerned about that. We have a number of private school systems in our particular area of the province. I have not seen an increase in the number in the last five years in that particular area.

In terms of financial competition, I have a serious concern about that. I do not think that we are able to provide—on the basis of the funding that we have now, unless there is a change—equal opportunity to our students in terms of program offered.

Mr. Reilly: I think about the private schools, to be consistent with the position we have taken about parents, we would have to say that parents have every right to seek that kind of education for their children if they conscientiously feel that to be in the best interests of their children. We can only look benignly upon the flourishing of the private system if that is where people are choosing to go.

In terms of competition, I think there is no question, realistically, that there will be political competition for resources, anything that is scarce. Wherever you have two or more parties involved, you will have competition to get those. That is realistic.

I think if you mean competition in terms of attracting students, to the degree that we compete in any way other than a way that Peter has said, we let ourselves down. I do not see any intention, certainly in the board I am in, to compete in that sense of marketing. We will do the best we can to put this kind of program and philosophy into place, and our faith would be that a significant number of people will choose that.

Mr. Mahoney: If I could just cite an example for a second, one of the concerns I would have—and Tom, you would be familiar with it—is where you take an area where there is not a public school in existence and the children in that area are bused out to an older school outside of their community, and yet there are, in one instance that you and I are both familiar with, two separate schools existing. Perhaps this is getting off the philosophy, but it does relate to the competition, because the feeling is that the separate school board in that particular instance is attempting to compete and attract those students. I would be very concerned about that feeling spreading.

Could I ask one final question on the crowded curriculum? In St. John's 10 days ago at a meeting of legislators from the United States and Canada at which I was in attendance, the crowded curriculum took up a fair amount of time. My concern is that your goals have been stated as Catholic educators very clearly and very strongly in favour of the teaching relationship with God and Jesus Christ and the ultimate philosophy that follows. The people who have been before us from the public board stressed very strongly morals and values and things of that nature in a less specific sense than you have done, but clearly, to me, teaching our kids about drug abuse, incest, acquired immune deficiency syndrome, sex education, family life and all of the things that have been identified here is really important.

I would be concerned if we decided that the curriculum was getting too crowded so we had better stop talking about these things in the schools, because we sure did not talk about them in the 1960s, I tell you, at least not very loudly. I think it is a quantum leap that we have gone in education, where we openly discuss these things to the point where the kids can come home and openly discuss them with mom and dad.

I would just be concerned that the Hamilton-Wentworth submission and other comments that have been made here would tend to suggest that maybe we should be moving away from those aspects being part of the curriculum, simply because the curriculum is too crowded and we are not learning enough about the three Rs.

Mr. Reilly: I could comment on that, if I might. I think what happens is that those initiatives come up as singular initiatives arising from our society and we want a program to deal with each of them. The perception on the part of teachers certainly is that we are bringing in a whole new bag of tricks to deal with this one thing. Somehow, I think we have to reach the stage where we solidify or consolidate a number of those under one kind of heading. I think we do it, for example, through the religion and morals program. I was reading an excerpt from Scotland the other day where I thought a kid had it right at last. It was a religion exam and they were asked to write down the sixth commandment. This young fellow wrote down, "Thou shalt not admit adultery."

Mr. Jackson: You always get one good one. Interjections.

Mr. Reilly: If you take the fifth or sixth commandment and make that the basis of teaching, it literally does cover a multitude of sins. In other words, a morals program covers many of these other things. You will never get students away from smoking by telling them of the danger of lung cancer. They do not believe it; they are eternal at that age. But if it can be seen as an abuse, if there is a belief, a faith element they can be brought to believe in, then that is the springboard for other things. I think we bring in too many bits and pieces and mesmerize everybody.

Mr. Jackson: I have one question. Mr. Reilly, you heard the line of questioning I presented to the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association with respect to the challenge of now rewriting the goals of education for Ontario for the 1990s. On page 7, you make reference, at the third bullet, that the supervisory officers

would recommend to the select committee that "it allow for the constitutional right of separate schools to nourish an educational position somewhat distinct from the current mainstream of our culture."

Am I to interpret it that we should be developing two sets of aims for the two systems or would you be satisfied simply with a cover statement that, having said all the aforementioned aims and objectives, the separate system reserves the right to develop something distinct from the mainstream of society? We really have to deal with this issue and that is why I am being direct with the question, because I am looking for guidance.

Mr. Reilly: No, I will be direct with the answer. I think if you rate a broad set of goals, very similar, I would say, to the ones that already exist in Ontario, you are leaving enough leeway for that position to be held. Basically, the priorities may differ from other parts of the system, as they will vary from rural Ontario to urban Ontario in many ways with the nature of the community, but it should be broad enough to encompass this. I do not think we need a different set of goals. We are citizens of the province. I think we contribute to the province and I think we come under the same global umbrella as everyone else.

Mr. Ferren: I would concur with that. We make that in the first point, that we would see the philosophy of education being expressed in very broad terms.

Mrs. O'Neill: You did mention that Hamilton-Wentworth was not really part of your presentation, but I would like to go back to a point Mr. Reycraft was making regarding day care. The section of it I am interested in is the second paragraph because I have had, in my role, quite a bit of inquiry from boards, particularly directors of education, regarding this new relationship that is going to be thrust upon the school boards: "With the advent of day care facilities in the schools, there must be a forceful promotion of the constellation of values which support the programs."

I really do not know what that means; maybe you do not either since this is not your paper. Could you help me a bit in what may be the thinking here?

1620

Mr. Ferren: Tom, you start. I have expressed what I see as the philosophy.

Mrs. O'Neill: I am not interested in the age. I guess I am interested in your new relationship

with what we have considered a social service. There is going to be a much more formal relationship now between the school and that group.

Mr. Reilly: Certainly. There will be a close relationship, and parents will see that identity and expect the school to have some kind of influence, whether it has a nun in day care.

It is typical educational jargon, but they are simply saying: "Make it clear what you are trying to do in day care. You are providing social activities for children. You are providing services suited to their age. If necessary, you are helping them with basic needs like feeding themselves and all those kinds of things. You are allowing them to play, a certain degree of freedom and readiness to come to formal education, not to begin it here. Promote that so that parents do not get the impression, 'Now he is in school; he will be reading next year.'"

I have read, and I subscribe to it at least in part, that one of the biggest onuses carried in North America is that the child shall read in grade 1 or the child is a failure. Think over that one. I think that is an expectation that lots of people in North America have. In other countries in the world, that is not an expectation. There are some European countries where you go to school at seven or eight.

Mrs. O'Neill: All the things you said at first, of course, are still in the domain of the Ministry of Community and Social Services, the programs that go on in there, but I suppose what you are suggesting to us is that in this area in particular we try to be as clear as possible about the relationship and try to be as up front as possible with parents about that relationship.

Mr. Reilly: Yes.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: In the same area, I guess there is a balance. I would not want day care to be described as something other than education. Maybe the distinction they are making here is not bad. It should not be considered schooling, but it obviously is education.

Mr. Reilly: That is right.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I seem to get a fair number of phone calls in late summer from parents of kids who have been in day care. One of the concerns is that because they have been in day care, because their social skills in some cases have advanced more quickly than those of kids who have not been in day care, as well as their abilities in early reading skills and so forth, there are implications, obviously, for kindergarten and grade 1. If there is more access to day care, we

cannot just leave kindergarten and grade 1 the way they are, because the kids will be coming in at a higher level.

Mr. Reilly: With different experiences. I think that is a point we make early in the paper. We are talking here about the organized school system and the kind of expectations surrounding it. This is education, better education than maybe we got with all of us sitting in a classroom somewhere. We are saying no, that we have narrowed the focus, and day care should not be automatically associated or made equal to what we consider to be formal schooling.

That is the thing. If you have children or, even more so, grandchildren, you rejoice in a step or a word. One step or word in school, depending on your age, might not be rejoiced in to the same extent. So we are saying, "Do not bring all that baggage into day care, necessarily."

Mr. D. S. Cooke: The problem remains if you changed from day care, and we have had that discussion in a variety of committees here.

There is one aspect of this in the Hamilton paper that I am hoping you disagree with. There seems to be an underlying philosophy that day care is babysitting, that it is a putting down of the family rather than seeing it as a support system to help the family. I refer specifically to "Further Comments," the first two paragraphs.

I am assuming that you may not share those particular views; those are the views of this particular school board, not—

Mr. Ferren: We see it as a support for that.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Reilly, would you like to add a few words to that?

Mr. Reilly: Simply that I guess if we get back to the philosophical level, given my choice of all possible worlds, I would like there to be more choices for families than currently seem to be developing because of the economic system we live in. I think it is healthy that a woman should be able to choose to have a career. I think it is equally healthy that she should be able to choose to have a career of raising her children full-time, and I guess this is a reaction to what is perceived as a general kind of push in society to force people to have two incomes and so on.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: One aspect of child care or early childhood education that I think is so underemphasized is not just the aspect of women being able to access the work market. That is important and essential, but the other aspect is that we got all sorts of kids whom I worked with when I worked at children's aid into day care, not because their folks were not at home but because

it was an absolutely essential aspect of their growing up to supplement their early childhood education and growing up as children. So to me, it should not just be looked at from this aspect. It is a kids' support program, too, as well as a support for the mother and father.

Mr. Reilly: We would subscribe to that.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Reilly, Mr. Ferren, thank you for appearing before our committee today.

That concludes the hearings of the select committee on education for today. This hearing will be rebroadcast tonight for anybody who has either missed a segment or was so fascinated that he would like a repeat performance.

We stand adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The committee adjourned at 4:27 p.m.

CONTENTS

Tuesday, July 19, 1988

Philosophy and Goals of Education	E-105
Walter G. Pitman	E-105
Retail Council of Canada	E-115
Ontario Public School Trustees' Association	E-121
Afternoon sitting	E-131
Ontario Association of Education Administrative Officials	E-131
Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association	E-139
Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association	E-147
Adjournment	E-154

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Chairman: Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)
Vice-Chairman: Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)
 Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
 Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)
 Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)
 Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)
 Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)
 Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)
 Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)
 O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)
 Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)

Clerk: Mellor, Lynn

Clerk pro tem: Manikel, Tannis

Staff:

Porter, Ann, Research Officer, Legislative Research Service

Witnesses:

From the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education:

Pitman, Walter G., Director

From the Retail Council of Canada:

McKichan, Alasdair J., President

Murray, Gordon, Vice-President of Human Resources, Towers Department Stores

From the Ontario Public School Trustees' Association:

Wright, Arlene, President

Hall, Suzan

Miller, Cheryl, Chairman

Campbell, Ken

Gardiner, Heather

Whitehead, Robert

From the Ontario Association of Education Administrative Officials:

Wells, Allen R., Director of Education and Secretary, Lambton County Board of Education

Lozon, Earl H., Director of Education and Secretary-Treasurer, Kent County Roman Catholic
 Separate School Board

Grant, Jim L., Superintendent of Schools, Brant County Board of Education

Willms, Walter P., Director of Education and Secretary, Windsor Board of Education

From the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association:

Knott, Douglas, Deputy Secretary General

Haugh, Michael, Second Vice-President

From the Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association:

Ferren, Peter, Director of Education

Reilly, Thomas J., Executive Director





Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Select Committee on Education

Philosophy and Goals of Education



First Session, 34th Parliament

Wednesday, July 20, 1988

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

CONTENTS

Contents of the proceedings reported in this issue of Hansard appears at the back, together with a list of the members of the committee and other members and witnesses taking part.

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues can be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at (416) 965-2159.

Hansard subscription price is \$16.00 per session, from: Sessional Subscription Service, Information Services Branch, Ministry of Government Services, 5th Floor, 880 Bay Street, Toronto, M7A 1N8. Phone (416) 965-2238.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Wednesday, July 20, 1988

The committee met at 10:08 a.m. in room 151.

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS OF EDUCATION (continued)

Madam Chairman: I recognize a quorum and we will begin this morning's session of the select committee on education. We have three presenters this morning: the Ontario Principals' Association will be followed by the Ontario Association of Alternative and Independent Schools and the final submission this morning will be by the Family Coalition Party.

Just prior to beginning, I will bring you up to date on the hearing session on the final day, Thursday, July 28. We have talked to the Minister of Education, Chris Ward, who will be coming with Bernard Shapiro, the deputy minister, that day. He has indicated that his presentation is relatively short and then he is available for the balance of the day for questions from the members. But there was some indication that he may not need that full day for the questioning, so we will wait and see what happens in that event.

We will start with the Ontario Principals' Association, Mr. Moore and Mr. Cranbury, if you would like to come forward. Once you have taken a seat, would you identify yourself for purposes of electronic Hansard? Welcome.

ONTARIO PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION

Mr. Moore: My name is John Moore. Andy Cranbury is with me. I will be making the major part of the presentation. We have set out deliberately to do two things: to deal only with the philosophy of education as it deals with the child in the school and to keep it very brief so that the majority of time can be spent in exchange of questions and answers which probably will be more useful.

To give you some background that may make us unique in regard to other groups you have heard, we are a volunteer organization of principals and vice-principals across the province. The federations will be quick to point out that they are the official voice of all teachers, and anyone who belongs to our organization simply does that by volunteering to pay a fee. It is open to all principals and vice-principals in the

province, across all federations, private schools and all.

We currently have about 1,000 members, although we have been as high as 2,000. Each member of our executive is a practising principal in a school. We do not maintain an office or a staff, so all of our work for the Ontario Principals' Association is done on a volunteer basis, outside of our regular jobs.

Our main thrust is in professional development, where we try to share information with other principals' associations, through the publication of a newsletter and through an annual conference. Mr. Cranbury is our contact with the ministry and discusses with it regularly ideas we feel should go out to the principals' group and things that we can bring to the ministry.

The idea, of course, is that we feel we are a rather unique group, in the sense that we are in-school administrators dealing directly, day to day, with the children. This is not to suggest that we have any idea of separating ourselves from the federations; we just feel principals have some unique needs that can be addressed in a group like ours.

I guess the main thrust we see in dealing with the child is the fact that we have passed on from what we might call a rote society. We are no longer training children to be on assembly-line production but are training them for a technological age which is rapidly changing. The world is getting smaller, the information from world sources comes to us almost immediately, and I think we are past the day when we can supply them all the knowledge they will need for life.

What we have to deal with is providing them with a basic knowledge that they can then take and build on and rationalize and change and retrain as may be necessary in their careers. For many of them, careers will change several times in their lifetimes, so I do not think you should train for any particular career but provide a base from which they can train for many.

I think we are also in an age of individualism. When we deal with the individual, there is much more to his educational life than academics. One must deal with the social and the emotional growth of the child. As more and more parents are out of the home, we become more and more

the care giver, in many senses of the word, rather than just an educator.

I think another concern is that the chronological age of the child is one very small aspect of his growth. For 10-year-olds there are many variations in what they can accomplish and what their ability is, and these things are affected by all that goes on in their lives.

As I said, many roles that were formerly left to church and home have now been turned over to the school, in the establishment of health care, social values and those kinds of things, which we did not necessarily think of in years past. I am not sure all educators are equipped to handle them as well as we might.

For many children, the one thing they spend most of their life around is television. Studies suggest that they spend more time watching television than they spend in school, so I think we have to recognize the fact that it is a very major influence in their life.

Hopefully, we can adapt to all of those things and provide the child with four key areas. I think the first of those probably is thinking skills. If the child can deal rationally with what is before him and think it through, then he is being equipped for adapting to what is going on around him.

They need strategies for lifelong learning. It is impossible to exist in the world without learning continuing throughout your life. I think that if education can provide them with some way of understanding that learning must go on and adapting their basic information to new learning, something is accomplished.

I have suggested that technology will be a major part of their lives. I think the one that is growing the most rapidly is their involvement in the world community. No longer can we concentrate on our home base, but momentarily we get news from around the world.

I am going to take section B of the brief, if you are following along, and expand a little on each of the statements in it, and then at the end of that possibly we can have an exchange of questions and information.

Each child is an individual, and although we can predict a pattern of development, we cannot predict the rate that children will pass through that pattern. Many things affect that pattern, things that go right back to conception, and anything that is based on chronological age can be very different for different children. The rates of academic, emotional and social growth all vary, depending on their lives.

A basic core is very realistic. I think every child leaving school should have a basic core of

information, and that will probably centre around ability to communicate, some ability in mathematics and some world awareness, but I do not think that we can prescribe a total core for education. I think it must be open-ended in the sense that each child can reach at a different rate. If you can design that education to provide them with the opportunity to reach, then it gives them a chance to develop to their fullest potential.

Also we must be careful that in setting a core we do not force someone who is unable to reach into a position of failure, a position where they appear to be a misfit with their peers or where they are under emotional stress until they cannot function properly.

Education is rapidly changing, and this is why we are suggesting that lifelong learning is important; the ability to use the base, to analyse, to synthesize that information and to build new from that which exists. It is, as I said, impossible to give them all the skills that will be needed in life. I am sure some of our children who are in school today will be working at jobs that we have not even thought of yet, and so it would be quite impossible to provide a base for that. If we can keep them being able to build on what they currently have, then they will be able to move forward in that sense.

Teaching must encompass all parts of the child, academic, social and emotional. It is all part of learning; it is all necessary. Each takes time and each is affected by the other. We may very easily be able to measure the academic growth, but I think it is very difficult to determine the social and emotional growth or the state it is in from day to day in any form of evaluation.

Specialization, we feel, must be delayed until such time as the child has a core of basic knowledge and has some ability to choose what specialization he might wish to follow. They must not cut off future opportunities by specializing too early in their lives. It is probably appropriate to leave it to the senior division of high school. Certainly they are not able at the elementary level and in the early high school years to make realistic choices about their careers, choices that would lead them into courses that cut off doors for them in the future.

We have talked a little bit about their choice of careers. Many children will choose a career and by the time they have completed high school, it has probably changed three or four times. Statistics tell us that it will change three or four times for many of them in their lifetime. This is why we believe in a core that will provide a base for several careers. This allows the direct training

for that career at a later time as appropriate to their interests and their jobs.

Co-operative education is certainly a step in this direction, where we allow students to go out into the workplace to a type of job that might be of interest to them. Some co-op students that I have had experience with certainly have changed their choices or established their choices in that kind of experience, so it is a very useful kind of program.

1020

Testing, I am sure, is an issue that will create considerable discussion. It is very easy to suggest that a test is appropriate to determine whether education is meeting success or not. I guess the unfortunate part of that is that you have only two choices when you finish the test, if that is the purpose of it. Either it is or it is not. If it is not, what do you do? If it is, then you can brag.

I think testing should be at the other end of the scale. It should be a start to what you are doing, not a finish. It should be the basis for your program, the basis for diagnosis and revision and should help you to determine what the child has need of rather than what he has accomplished. In that way, you are building for the child's needs rather than finding out whether you succeeded or not.

I guess the biggest challenge to education today is the fact that it has now become of an all-encompassing nature and society is making various demands upon it. Schools now are involved in counselling, in day care, in lunch-hour and after-hour programs. You have concerns from the public as to different thrusts that people wish to see take place. You have a growing community that no longer has children in school and wishes to understand why education costs are as they are. You have things like Bill 82 that provide for the individual care of needy children and all the process that it must go through.

So I think there is a very large challenge out there for the schools to meet what has become their domain, not always directly but sometimes simply because it was passed over to them. In that sense, we need a very clear statement of education as what the school will take care of, and then we need to train and provide the personnel to deal with what has been set as its goal.

I realize that this is very short, but we have usually found that the discussion that takes place is much more important than the presentation. So I will end our formal presentation, if that is OK.

Madam Chairman: That is fine. Mr. Cranbury, do you have any comments you wish to make at this time?

Mr. Cranbury: One thing occurs to me. Dealing with the issue of a pluralistic society, one of the questions that came up at these discussions yesterday was with regard to the crowded curriculum. I guess my concern is that there is really not a whole lot of evidence that suggests that more of the same improves the situation. That is, if we work harder and harder at reading or being able to fill out application forms or whatever, that does not necessarily mean that we will get better. There is a point at which all of that stops.

I do not have any difficulty with acquired immune deficiency syndrome education in the program because it gives you another avenue to press forward with reading skills in an area that certainly, from my point of view as a middle school principal, is of interest to students. That is what we build on.

I am saying that if the attention span of children really is 10 to 15 minutes at a time, then to break up the program into smaller bits does not hurt at all. If we have a different point of view each time we go, then we are picking up on some other interests that are not just grammar or reading or listening or speaking.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. I know that we have a number of members who were formerly educators in their other lives, and they are champing at the bit. Mr. Keyes has indicated he would like to start off the questioning.

Mr. Keyes: Just pointing out one specific at first, when you look at your part B, under "Concepts," item E, and you talk about being careful as to the time of specialization, do I take it that this, in not direct terms but in rather shaded terms, is a response to Radwanski's streaming concept?

Mr. Moore: Yes. We did not get into detail on that here because we are making a presentation in September on that directly, but it was our feeling that sometimes it happens too early.

Mr. Keyes: You have not really talked too much directly about the 13 goals of education as exist in all the documents at the moment. As you look at those and discuss them in your association, do you find any major restrictions at the present time in fulfilling the role of teaching, etc., with the goals as they are currently expressed? Are they too general or too specific in any instances and do they provide any restrictions?

Mr. Cranbury: They certainly do not restrict you; I think they cover the world. Maybe they are too all-encompassing and pass the issues of self-concept, building a better view of yourself. The goals, as we seen them, have been the same for quite some time. They are not new, necessarily. Some of the things that perhaps we really need to focus on these days are the opportunities past school, that children see that they can be successful in life, that there is a point to all of this.

One of the things we were talking about before the session started was visible minorities. Our executive does not demonstrate any visible minorities, nor does the group that we are talking with today, but I think the lesson of last evening was that we need to be able to dream and we have to have the models that say we can be successful. Motivation is a great thing, but we have to be able to see that we can be successful too.

Mr. Keyes: Just two other quick questions. One is easier to put and is slightly in the way of the philosophy of education, but it may come up in your presentation later in the year. Do you feel there is sufficient involvement of the personnel who are charged with the delivery of the education system in the policymaking aspect of it?

Mr. Moore: I guess in response to that, our general feeling probably would be, directly, no; although we have always had a good hearing at the ministry when we came with ideas. One of the suggestions we made back a year or so ago was for some formula that might be worked out to have someone directly from the school level or possibly something like our association attend at the ministry during a term of office, so that you had someone who was only away from his school that year. However, at the moment it is being done on a voluntary basis of meeting with the ministry on a regular basis. We feel we have input. I am sure the teachers' federations and other associations would say, similarly, that they have input.

Mr. Keyes: Finally, can you just think of some of the major restrictions that the system puts upon those charged with the delivery of the system that hampers the development of the full potential of a child, which we place as one of the first aims? What are some of those major restrictions that the system places upon you so that you have difficulty in meeting one of the major goals of the educational system, that is to develop every individual to his fullest potential? You may want to answer in the fall.

Mr. Moore: I think one of the major restrictions, from an elementary standpoint, is the time to deal with things. I can speak more from an elementary base. Many of the things you tended to dispatch very quickly in years gone by are now done through counselling and care programs. Where children need individual attention and individual help, then you need to have personnel to do that. In many of our schools, although people may say there is a large group of personnel there, I think from the inside we always see a shortage of time and bodies to deal with those individual needs. I do not know if Andy would answer that similarly.

Mr. Cranbury: Yes, I think a fair portion of my time in the school is spent dealing with parents and students who are a little different from the regular.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Keyes, if you have concluded your portion, then I will go on to Mr. Johnston.

Mr. Keyes: I try to move swiftly through to get to the next part. I remember our time frames of yesterday.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Johnston, the floor is yours.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: One of the things that interests me most about the statement of goals of education is that they all seem so individualistically oriented, and much of the language that you have used today is all sort of an enhancement of the individual opportunity, with very little in the way of understanding how this works within the groups and larger hierarchies of our society. I wanted to ask you a couple of things about the role of the education system as a social equalizer, whether you think it has a function in assisting people in lower economic groups and maybe culturally identifiable groups to rise in the social system that we have, whether it has been successful in doing so, in your view, and what limitations and expectations we should have on the system for helping that process.

1030

Mr. Cranbury: The school I work in is in a multicultural area. We have a lot of visible minority students and, by and large, as I think of them right now, they are quite successful. My only concern is that they continue to be successful and that they have the models in their view that indicate that there is something worth while that they can work towards and be successful at, regardless of who they are, what colour they are or whatever.

So yes, I think we can be successful and I think we are successful. I know there are some concerns in the Metro area with regard to relegating some visible minorities to vocational kinds of occupations, regardless of maybe their innate abilities. I do not see that where I am, but it is possible and I think it is something we have to be concerned about.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: We are trying to pull together some information which we are expecting some time over the summer around what actually has happened—especially by various groupings; native populations, various ethnic populations, but specifically socioeconomically—what has happened to kids from lower economic levels in the system.

On the basis of the old information that was around, the presumption I am still making is that we have given them very little upward social mobility. If you look at who gets streamed low, they primarily come from low-income families. If you look at who goes to universities, it is still primarily members of the middle class who go on to post-secondary levels of education and therefore have those other doors opened to them.

I guess what I am trying to ask is, are we missing something in our individualistic notion of individual development here that is ignoring some other basic facts about the restrictions that are put on kids from poor families? If we are, are they things that can be dealt with within the education system, or are they of necessity adjuncts to the education system that have to be dealt with separately or in connection with the school system?

Mr. Moore: I think my experience with visible minorities is quite different from Andy's, because in a small northern community it was very white Anglo-Saxon Protestant until Honda arrived and we have a very visible Honda group in Alliston.

When you talk about lower socioeconomic groups having trouble rising, I think a lot of that stems back even to preschool times. I think of a student I had come to school who fits very well with what you said. Her mother said, "I took her to the library once and she made a fuss, so I have not been there again." That was her experience with books on entering school. It is very difficult to bring that child to the same kind of level as someone who shows up, as a little girl did, reading novels and being able to discuss them in kindergarten. I think a lot of those experiences that affect their ability in school are determined long before we receive them in school.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: If that is the case and if the statistics are—we do not know yet—but if the newest census data indicate that the same kind of trends are continuing that we have seen over the last decades, then what is it that can be added to these goals of education that can recognize the fact that we are allowing this hierarchy to continue? We talk about this great mythology about our all being able to become millionaires in this country, much as the Americans do in their situation, and yet we know that is not the case.

I am from an area north of Peterborough, and in 1964—this is dating me—I was the first person from that area, which had been settled in 1829, ever to go to a university. There was something very specific about that being a very poor rural area which meant that those kids were never going to get the same kind of opportunities that a kid in Forest Hill automatically expects in our society.

I guess what I am saying is that you have that social problem that is out there initially that will help to restrict that child's chances before he even gets to school. What is it that we should putting into the goals of education that will, hopefully, help them catch up or get some sort of shot at an outcome equal to the rest of them?

Mr. Moore: Yes, there are two things possible. We have to somehow provide them with the experiences they have missed, because a lot of those same people are not travellers who see those kinds of things; possibly there is an answer in the thrust in day care, with younger children coming to school where you can concentrate on those kinds of experiences, more so than exposing them to academics at a younger age.

I think the other thing is to involve a community or somewhere where they have a lot of experience with books. I know a school that is beside a senior citizens' home and it has them come in and read regularly with children. It has been a great experience, especially for the children who have been not been read to a lot. I guess community thrust and possibly to spend the time on experiences at a younger age.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I know we are pushed for time and other people want to get in. I will move to something totally different just for a second and let it go.

First, I would say we have not talked about pedagogy here and methodology of teaching at all in terms of whether or not that is relevant, and all the mixes of that. I hope that we get a chance to do that at some point with people like

yourselves. Maybe this fall we can get into that more.

I wonder if we can talk just a little bit about the teaching structure and the process in terms of your role as principals. We have a very interesting model that is put there for kids to look at in terms of how a school is run, which is quite an authoritarian structure, in my view, a hierarchical structure with an awful lot of power vested in a single individual who is known as the principal. It becomes something which teachers aspire to as part of their upward mobility. It becomes something which I think sends down some very interesting messages as well in terms of how our society orients itself in terms of power.

I wonder if you have any comments about such things as limitations on the terms of principals—I remember there was once some talk about principals actually going back to teaching again at some point or other, although I have never noticed that as a particular trend, after a four-year term or something—and whether you have any comments about the kinds of controls or influences that parents and teachers within the school community maybe should have on principals and hiring and those kinds of things.

Mr. Moore: I am not sure it is a terribly powerful position, as you suggest. Some days I am very sure it is not.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: It sure seemed that way, though.

Mr. Jackson: It all depends on the superintendent.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Perhaps the visits to the office that I had do not happen any more.

Mr. Mahoney: We all know the secretary runs the school.

Mr. Moore: I think it is important that a principal keep his ear attuned to those groups. I think the person who thinks he can stay in the office and be the power and make the decisions without the input and support of both those groups would probably have visits from the superintendent, as you suggest, but not the kind he would want. I think that, more and more, decisions that are made in the office are influenced by both of those groups.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: What about the term? I know there has been talk for years about whether principals should always be principals. Principals, in many respects, are the best teachers; that is why they are supposedly appointed to the job of principal.

Mr. Moore: When I was a vice-principal and wanted to be one I thought they should be termed.

I am not sure how to answer that. There are certainly benefits in getting back into the classroom and being really attuned to the fact that things go on. I know of many principals who schedule themselves that way on purpose, even though they do not have to. In some smaller schools across the province, of course, they do teach on a regular basis.

On the other hand, you certainly learn with the job. I feel I can do the job in support of the school better now than I could in my first three or four years. You lose a certain amount of expertise; you also gain something on behalf of the children. To give you a snap answer to term appointments, I am hesitant to do that. There are certainly benefits on both sides of the coin.

1040

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That is a theme I would love to come back to some time.

Mr. Moore: Maybe what we need is a formal evaluation process that determines who should and who should not.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: But not a standardized test.

Mr. Moore: No; I am not as opposed there as I am with children.

Madam Chairman: After Mr. Mahoney made that last comment about the secretaries running the schools, I am not sure how receptive of his questions you will be, but let's give him a shot.

Mr. Mahoney: I am biased. My wife was a school secretary for seven years. She tells me she ran the school.

Mr. Cranbury: She is probably right.

Mr. Mahoney: As a new member of the Legislature, I agree there are a number of jobs that should probably have sunset provisions put on them. It takes a while.

Mr. Jackson: Can I quote you on that?

Mr. Mahoney: Yes.

Specifically on your presentation, on item H of part B, I did not quite get the feeling that you are—I heard the one comment that you are not opposed to AIDS education because it is good for reading.

Mr. Cranbury: Well, it gives us another way of approaching the issue from a different point of view than saying, "OK, we are going to read now."

Mr. Mahoney: I am curious. We have talked about this in the last couple of days, about teaching societal problems in school. Is that really new? When I went to school as a youngster, I remember tuberculosis was a big issue and you used to go for shots and you hated it. Polio was a big issue with some of the younger children getting the disease. It was part of our health education, limited as it was. Clearly, problems that affected society were being taught in the education system. They were not perhaps seen as being quite as outrageous as talking about safe sex, family habits and terrible diseases like AIDS, but they have always been there.

Mr. Moore: I think there are two major changes. I think the first is the obligations involved in some of the topics, where you may have dealt with them in a health topic, some more than others. There is now the obligation to deal with them in a formal way. I think at the same time we saw a withdrawal from the Ministry of Health of the health services in the schools that was able to support those kinds of programs. I know, for instance, that in my school of 800, I have a nurse assigned half a day and she is to do home visits within that half day. It is a very limited resource—although she is wonderful; I am not trying to put her down at all—that is available to support those programs that have now become an obligation.

Mr. Mahoney: You are not objecting from an educational point of view to dealing with those kinds of problems in the schools, and there are offshoot benefits, but you are saying there should be a larger infrastructure of support, whether it be from a regional health department or the Ministry of Health or wherever it comes from. There should be more support for it.

Mr. Moore: That would be my feeling, yes.

Mr. Mahoney: I was interested in the item just prior to that about the testing because it seems to me there has always been, at least for many, many years, forms of pretesting. There is a very extensive service offered at the Hospital for Sick Children of analysing and pretesting and trying to determine a child's needs, particularly if you go through a learning disability situation. Did you in essence say we should do some testing at the beginning and not at the end? Is that what I really heard?

Mr. Moore: No. I guess the fear we had is that we saw or heard talk of province-wide testing type of things. If the province is coming in to test all grade 7s, what is the purpose? Is it to improve the grade 7 program or is it to have something out

there? I think the testing that teachers do in the room to help Johnny know what he should be doing better is one form of thing; but when you come with a standardized kind of thing that is to prove that all grade 7s can write a sentence and put a period on it: what is the purpose of it?

Mr. Mahoney: Perhaps I could ask one other question or point as to Mr. Johnston's comments about the specificity and the individualization. We have heard that from every group that has come here and that clearly is the trend in education today. There is a concern I have heard from people that kids spend so much time in school learning "me," learning their individual characteristics and abilities, that they do not learn any skills. They wind up coming out of school being great people to sit down and have a general conversation with, or they might have a real understanding of philosophy, but do they have any actual skills? Are we going away from teaching the mechanics of certain jobs, the actual reality, and stressing too much the philosophy and the individualism?

Mr. Moore: I do not think they come out with a lack of skills. The basic skills are still there. They may not have the detailed ability to write a 50-page essay, but then most children leaving elementary or secondary school probably do not need that skill.

What we have tried to do, though, is mix with basic skills an open-ended kind of program so that instead of asking how many boys were in the story and where they went, your questions would relate to, "What would have happened if they had done this?" You have challenged the child to think and to develop a scenario of: "This could have happened. The effects would have been this or this. What would have happened if you had followed it that way?" You do not want the rote kind of responses, but I think the basic skills are still there.

Mr. Mahoney: One final closing question: You also mentioned that the traditional programs that have been left to church and home have now been moved into the school, and I agree that is the case. Do you think we need to reverse that trend strongly and get the church and home, particularly the home, back more into the lives of these students?

Mr. Moore: I do not see how we can do that because I think the problem is that as we increase the number of single-parent families, working parents and so on, they spend less and less time with their children. For many of them, those kinds of programs, like AIDS and other health care programs, would not be handled. Unfortu-

nately, I think we have inherited them out of necessity.

Mr. Reycraft: We are charged with the responsibility now of examining the philosophy and the goals of the education system in this province, but it seems to me that of at least equal, and perhaps even more importance, is some reflection on the individuals who are responsible for seeing that the system meets those goals. Certainly principals have a major role in that, but so do teachers. There has been some discussion in the province over the last couple of years about teachers and teacher training and whether the current system is appropriate.

You alluded very briefly to that at the end of your preliminary presentation this morning. I wonder if you might give us the benefit of your thoughts on whether there need to be significant changes in the way teachers are trained in Ontario.

Mr. Moore: I will let Mr. Cranbury answer as well, but I think there are two concerns there. I think, yes, there need to be some changes. First, I think they need to have more of an apprenticeship program where they actually get into a school and be involved in the day-to-day operations. Certainly, the concurrent program that goes on now does more of that than the traditional teachers' college program, but the more time they spend in the school with actual children, working with teachers, is to their benefit.

I think the second thing is that we are probably facing a crisis with teachers in the next few years because of the great influx in the early 1960s. There are literally thousands of us who are going to retire in the next few years, and I am concerned that at the moment we do not have sufficient supply out there to replace us.

Do you want to add to that?

Mr. Cranbury: I agree that there need to be some changes. I live and work in the McMaster University community in Hamilton, and what I find is that there are a number of students, maybe first-, second- or third-year people, who are looking down the road at teaching careers, who are willing to volunteer in our school. They need the experience to find whether they really want to do this or not, and it also gives them a credential, if they are successful with us that gives them a little added credibility when they apply to a teacher's college or a faculty of education.

I also feel that a bachelor's degree plus a year of teacher education is not the route to go. I guess as a graduate of a program at the State University of New York, I have seen that other models tend to give people more experience in the schools

while they are developing their academic or bachelor's degree material. I am not sure that one year of some experience in schools is enough to say that they are now ready to be full-fledged teachers.

1050

Mr. Reycraft: I appreciate the responses. They tended to focus on preparing teachers before they entered teaching, but it seems to me that certainly since I started teaching in 1962, we have gone through the Robart's plan, Hall-Dennis and Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions. There have been some rather dramatic swings in educational philosophy. There is really no requirement for teachers to go back to re-educate themselves, unless they want to upgrade. The choice is really one that is left to the teachers. Do you think there should be some requirement for teachers to go through some kind of formal re-education or reorientation periodically throughout their careers?

Mr. Cranbury: I think that is an important part. Renewal is an issue that has to be addressed, and I think our board and numbers of other boards that have staff development programs in place are attempting to deal with that. One of the things that concerns me particularly is the interface between us and the secondary schools we send our students to when they graduate. It is people knowing what goes on in other places, as well as in their own location—I am talking about teachers and principals—so that we know we are working together as opposed to taking shots at one another, as I think the McMaster entrance examination for a couple of years tended to do. We need to know we are working together.

There is also the issue of ministry guidelines, which are produced by people who are talented, that sometimes do not reach students for whatever reasons. You talked about ministry reviews yesterday. What happens when the review is over and the evidence is that what we thought was going on is not going on? What then takes place? On to the next review is what I see.

Madam Chairman: I would like to thank you, Mr. Moore and Mr. Cranbury, for coming before us today and sharing your wisdom and insight. We appreciate your submission and we will certainly be taking your comments into account.

Mr. Moore: Thank you very much. The presentation was prepared by our executive. The answers by Mr. Cranbury and I have been from ourselves, hopefully reflecting our executive. We thank you for the opportunity to make the

presentation. If anyone would like to visit schools as part of your process, we would be delighted to try to accommodate that somewhere that is convenient for you.

Madam Chairman: Our next delegation is from the Ontario Association of Alternative and Independent Schools. I understand there is a fairly large number of delegates. Would you like to come forward and after taking seats identify yourselves for purposes of electronic Hansard.

Mr. McBurney: There are five in our delegation, Madam Chairman.

Madam Chairman: Pull up an additional chair and try to ensure that you are close to a microphone.

ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF ALTERNATIVE AND INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

Mr. McBurney: The delegation here consists of, on my far left, Wendy Priesnitz, president of the association. Next to me on the left is Olga Anjema and her son Jeremy. On my right is Robert Routledge, who is the former president of the association, a director, and served on the Advisory Committee to the Commission of Inquiry into Private Schools in Ontario.

I assume the brief has been read. Nevertheless, I think for the purposes of the recorder and hearing it again, I will read at least part of it.

There was a time when government inaction to end the discrimination towards independent school supporters was excusable through ignorance concerning the nature of the schools, or because of the clouded constitutional issues about Roman Catholic school rights and the implications of full funding of the Roman Catholic system. This is no longer the case.

During the last provincial election, the Canadian Jewish Congress condemned as morally offensive that one religious system be funded without offering a measure of equity to at least the other religious independent schools. We agree. The government of Ontario can no longer hide behind a 150-year-old constitutional idiosyncrasy left over from our pioneer days, particularly since that tradition of discrimination, and that is what it was, has been swept away by the Supreme Court of Canada.

Failure to respond now to the much greater level of discrimination practised against independent school supporters is not only morally offensive; it is morally perverse.

We have witnesses with us today to tell you what the government's policy has meant in their lives, but before I do that, I want to read three or

four letters from other people who would have been here but for business and medical reasons cannot be, who want their testimony to be heard before this committee.

The first is a letter I received only yesterday from Christine Strang of Orillia, in which she says, in part:

"My children attend Orillia Christian School in Orillia, Ontario. My eight-year-old daughter has mild cerebral palsy and thus has special needs. This school has been fantastic in supporting our belief that our child should be in an integrated system. However, the school does not have the funds to provide resources such as speech pathology or occupational therapy. I have been battling this issue with various government bodies since my child started school in September 1986.

"In our county, (Simcoe) speech services are provided by Ministry of Health home care. I have begged, pleaded and fought with social workers, school board trustees and other government officials to allow this service to be provided for my daughter. The answer has been no! My local MPP...was no help either but he did find out that the head of Ministry of Health home care in Midhurst—the lady is named—"has refused us the speech service because our child attends a Christian school. I feel this is grossly unfair. We are presently paying \$30 per week for a half-hour session with a private speech pathologist....

"We desperately need to see changes in these areas. We are tax-paying parents and regardless of what school we choose to enrol our children in, we are entitled to have special needs services for our children."

I have another letter from a young man who is quite successful in his business now, who wanted to be here but could not. For the sake of others, he has sent us a message, which he dictated to us. This is from Steven Kane.

"Dear Committee Members:

"In 1975 there was a teachers' strike from November to January. This was in my first year of high school credits. Being a student that needed constant stimulation, I was not able to 'get back into the groove.' I was advanced to grade 10 with two grade 9 credits. My high school did not feel I was ready for them while my junior high school would not keep me in grade 9. It was at this time my family made the sacrifice to send me to the Toronto Learning Centre. Upon my being assessed there, serious deficiencies in my skill levels became apparent.

"With proper stimulation and efforts in the deficient areas of my education, I was able to

achieve what would have otherwise been impossible. My math level was at grade 3, 10th month, in grade 10. Without the opportunity for a proper education which in my case was out of reach in the public system, I would have been destined to cost the government a lot of money in later years, as I very likely could have ended up in jail, not unlike many frustrated adolescents.

1100

"I started an early acquaintance with the authorities that could have become progressively worse had I not begun a productive channel of my energies. I feel that if my family was not able to make the sacrifice to afford me the opportunity to realize my potential, I very likely would be unable to communicate this to you today.

"I am fortunate that my family was able to do this for me. There are many people out there that are not so fortunate. I think it should be up to the government to do something about the cost of special education for kids today and avoid spending the money to jail them or subsidize them tomorrow."

I have another letter from a single mother who intended to come here but found employment and will not jeopardize that job. This is addressed to this committee.

"I would like this opportunity to share my involvement with the private school system. Although I deeply regret not being able to attend this meeting because of employment reasons, I feel that my own experience with both the private and public school system should be heard.

"My son, who is 12 years old, had suffered from poor grades, failures, antisocial behaviour and low self-esteem throughout most of his school years. He failed grade 2 and spent most of his next year in remedial classes for behavioural problems and 'slow learners.'

"Because I firmly believed that my son was extremely bright and had potential, I enrolled him in a private school last September. With financial backup of my family, I was able to meet the high tuition fee.

"After one year at this school, the changes that have taken place for my son have been remarkable. He has adjusted well to the small, structured setting, which has resulted in both academic and learning skill gains. But most important of all is that he is now self-confident, outgoing and has formed close relationships with his classmates. This change has also had a positive reflection on his behaviour at home.

"In the public school remedial setting he was made to feel alienated from the 'normal' mainstream of study. At his private school, he is

integrated and accepted as a vital part of the whole student body.

"Although I feel that another year in this setting would reinforce and cement these personal achievements, as a single parent, the financial burdens are tremendous for me. I strongly feel that there should be some type of financial assistance available for these 'special needs' cases. My own research into this area has proven that there is a great need for some type of funding."

It is signed Carmen Isaacson.

Finally, a Mr. Houtman writes to say:

"Dear Mr. Smith"—Mr. Smith works out of 10 St. Mary Street.

"The Liberal Party is thinking ahead? Well, so am I. I am, as a parent, taking the initiative to select an education for my children which is in line with my religious beliefs and in line with what I want people to be like. As such, my children attend alternative and independent schools. I would like to see the Liberal Party take some initiative and take some actual steps towards funding these independent and alternative schools that are open to everyone who wishes to partake of that particular type of education. The schools which my children attend fully comply with all the requirements of your Ministry of Education. My children are receiving a good education. They are being prepared for the future.

"In the meantime, I am saving the taxpayers of Ontario tremendous amounts of money not having to educate my three children. Yet I am forced to educate them totally at my own expense. I look forward to the Liberal Party finally taking some initiative based on the Shapiro report and making some progress in giving me some justice in the matter of education. Until such time, your appeals are a thorn in the flesh and salt in open wounds. I would look forward to a positive response."

I will now introduce Olga Anjema, who would like to tell you a little bit about how the government's policy has affected her. Following that, I will complete the presentation.

Mrs. Anjema: I have written my thoughts down on paper, so I would like to read them to you.

First of all, this is my son, Jeremy. Jeremy is totally blind and he is a Braille-using student. He will be going into grade 8 in the fall. Jeremy spent four years in the provincial school for the blind in Brantford. Thanks to Bill 85, Jeremy was able to come home and attend public school.

However, we strongly believe in Christian education. We believe that God controls every aspect of life and that means He should be included in the aspect of education also, and our beliefs are as justified as anyone else's. It was our and Jeremy's desire for him to attend a Christian school, so in September 1987 he started at our local Christian school.

That meant there was no longer funding for a specialist teacher, a teacher's aide or any specialized equipment. These are all needs which Bill 85 states must be provided for the exceptional student.

We feel it is unfair that the taxes we pay met those needs in the public school but will not meet his needs now. We still pay the same taxes and Jeremy still has the same needs, but the money is no longer available for him. This is morally unjust.

We willingly pay our taxes for the good of everyone, but they should benefit all children. We are being excluded from all the benefits and privileges we pay for. It is really time for this government to provide funding for our schools and for the special needs in our schools. Our children are the ones who are losing out.

Mr. McBurney: I brought Mrs. Anjema and these letters partly because of our experience over the years of appearing before these committees of the government. I think we have now seen eight ministers of education looking upon this whole question of independent schools in a somewhat academic or abstract way. What we want you to see, of course, is the human stress and distress that accompanies a policy which is clearly unfair in the minds of most Ontarians.

I think it is very important that the select committee is examining, in its first-stage hearings, the philosophy and goals as a start, a foundational place. What it reveals, of course, is that there is no comprehensive policy for education—at least no articulated one—and the schools, as Dr. Shapiro pointed out, lack even a defined minimum satisfactory instruction requirement.

Recent history, in terms of Catholic school funding and the emergence of a francophone school system and other evidences of educational diversity such as the native people's schools where they can now hire native peoples in the schools, is rendering obsolete the old idea of Ontario education; that is, that there should be a single, publicly funded nonsectarian system overall. What is plain is that we are now working with a diversity of systems. This committee sits

here, I think, partly trying to adapt to that new social reality.

There are many philosophies of education present in this room and being expressed in Ontario, which is as it should be. It is antidemocratic to give preferential treatment to any one of them over the others. It would be proudly antidemocratic if this committee were to reinforce that in any way. A government, after all, cannot have a philosophy of education. It can only have a philosophy for education; if you like, a philosophy of how to govern fairly among the competing or parallel interests in this area.

I think it says well of the committee in its early co-operative effort that it was able to take a rather complex mandate which had everything in it, I think, including the kitchen sink, and identify equity or fairness which, after all, is the real business of government as a central criterion for the deliberations of this committee. Richard Johnston, as it appears in Hansard, introduced the idea of social equality as a central criterion. Mr. Jackson reinforced that in terms of equal access for students to programs. Mr. Jackson, Mr. Johnston and others reminded the committee, of course, that the legal recognition and public support of independent schools had to be discussed as part of the philosophy and goals of education in Ontario.

I think Mrs. O'Neill deserves credit for putting together the first summary statement which, with some review, became, and I quote from Hansard, "The committee will conduct a review of education philosophy in Ontario and the fundamental goals as they are directly related to the equal life chances and full development of each student and the very important role of parents or guardians in that development." I make note here in our written presentation that the invitation here did not include the words "and the very important role of parents or guardians in that development." We assume it is the intent of the committee that this be included. If not, we would like the omission explained.

Our experience over the years with anyone serious about this topic is that only schools which operate in the public interest are deserving of the protection and support of government, which is another way of saying that justice should be available to all once you know what the common criteria are. Of course, they ask about what those criteria should be. We are here basically to share from our own study and experience, and that includes looking at the five provinces which have formal support for independent schools and, of course, the very comprehensive Report of the

Commission on Private Schools in Ontario, the Shapiro report.

Some principles for that discussion: The draft report of the task force of my association, the Ontario Education Policy Options Task Force, was given to the three parties in January. From it, you should know that we have done this review of legislation. An early statistical feature of that report showed that most provincial education acts speak of these matters in a discretionary way, but not in a detailed way, which is to say the ministers of education are given broad powers to be interpreted as he or she will.

1110

The Shapiro report, by contrast, deals very comprehensively with a great number of issues and things which were once unspoken assumptions. Of course, the report itself contains its own philosophical assumptions about what public education should be. We are not here to endorse in total the Shapiro commission report. In fact, we take exception to some of the recommendations and some of the philosophic assumptions which appear in that report. Nevertheless, the depth and range of the report comes out of a framework of principles, eight in all, which undergird the analysis and conclusions of the commission.

We think it very important for this committee that whoever appears before it, and indeed the committee itself, has to clarify what principles lie behind the recommendations it will ultimately make to government. When we say that, it is important because then it does away with such things as people who bring the principle of "Don't give any money to independent schools; the health of our public system depends upon it." That is a spurious principle. The committee knows that the heart of the Shapiro report is that the present social reality, the diverse beliefs, needs and expectations of Ontarians, must be recognized in education policy.

As Dr. Shapiro put it quite succinctly in principles 6 and 7 of his report, "there should be no legal public monopoly in education, and private schools that meet the minimum standards specified by the government in terms of its obligation to both society and individual children should have a clear status in recognition both of the rights of citizens to make alternative choices and of the general value of diversity" and "diversity within the public school system should also be encouraged."

It is interesting that the Dirks report in Saskatchewan paraphrases that thusly: "A public monopoly of education would violate important

Saskatchewan values of diversity, parental choice, tradition and practice. Private schools that meet minimum standards respecting society's legitimate interests and children's legitimate rights should receive the legal recognition of the state as a social policy that befits the best interests of democracy and its implied freedoms and values."

You can see that the Shapiro report is taken seriously, at least outside of Ontario. To the insightful reader, the most disturbing conclusion from his report is that there is in fact no defined minimum standard of instruction for publicly funded schools in Ontario. It is only compulsory that a child be in school. There is no legal provision that the child will be offered satisfactory instruction, except where the Education Act refers to children being educated at home or elsewhere, and even there the term is not defined.

The commission recommended, therefore, that all schools—public, separate and independent—should, as a very condition of their existence, meet standards consisting of, in Dr. Shapiro's analysis, satisfactory instruction and qualified teachers. We believe that, at a very minimum, this committee must respond to the fact that there is no defined overall satisfactory instruction requirement for publicly funded schools and deal with the elements that should be part of such a requirement. That, of course, is part of our appendix A, satisfactory instruction, as we have worked with it, which we offer with a number of other things to this committee.

Indeed, we offer an education policy statement which is universalistic and by which government would commit itself to support responsible diversity in education: that diversity in education become the chosen direction for Ontario and not something to be pretended is not there; that a satisfactory instruction definition be subscribed to by all schools; and that a list of principles which delineate the range and limits, both of a school's governance powers and the government's powers in education, be adopted. These, at least from our point of view, are found in appendix A of the brief. We hope very much that some of that, or better, if you are able, become part of this committee's report to the government.

We are quite aware that none of the parties has a matured policy development in respect of these issues. Consequently, our recommendation to the committee is a fairly simply one: that it respond positively to the Shapiro commission charge that new initiatives, both in the public support of private schools and the relationship of

these schools to the public schools, be undertaken. We think it would be realistic.

Therefore, our principal recommendation is that upon completion of the September phase of these committee hearings and, we hope, a very early submission of a report, the select committee be reconstituted as an all-party select committee on alternative education to (a) examine and report on the extent to which any of the recommendations of the Commission on Private Schools in Ontario have been implemented or can be implemented under the present legislation and (b) develop within one year, in co-operation with all groups, supporting alternative philosophies and methodologies of education, an organizational model for the legal recognition and appropriate level or levels of funding for alternative schools which meet a standard of education approved by the Minister of Education for all schools in Ontario.

With that, we invite your questions.

Mrs. Marland: When you talk in generalities about special education needs—and I think particularly, Mrs. Anjema, of the very special education needs in your family—I am wondering where, other than the religious aspect, the public system failed. I speak from personal experience. I have a son who was in special-ed for six years in the public system and I recognize that he was in special-ed even prior to Bill 82.

Having seen the kind of educational opportunity that he had—this was in Peel and I recognize that is the largest public board in Canada, which may have given it more scope than some smaller boards—and what happened to him and ultimately the fact that he was able even to get into the mainstream, graduate from school and in fact graduate from Trent University, restored for me a lot of confidence in the public system as to opportunity for children with very special needs.

I am wondering, other than the fact there was a desire for you to have your son attend a Christian school, were the opportunities not available? I do not know where you live.

Mrs. Anjema: Wyoming.

Mr. McBurney: Wyoming, Ontario.

Mrs. Anjema: Near Sarnia.

Mrs. Marland: Did you not have that opportunity in the public system where you lived?

Mrs. Anjema: Are you asking me?

Mrs. Marland: Either.

Mr. McBurney: That Peel does it well is wonderful, and we certainly did not mean to draw any invidious comparisons, but Mrs.

Anjema and others choose schools that have certain values identification; and those schools are denied by public policy from sharing in those tax-paid facilities, which precludes the parents from making a choice unless they do it at great personal expense or the support of their community. The real issue here is why should one school be favoured for those services and another denied.

Mrs. Marland: No, I want to be clear—because I did preface what I said—that the values and the religion aspect were the decision. Quite innocently, I have to tell you that our three children were taught their religion and their values at home. What I want to be sure about is that the opportunity our children had in a public education system because of where they lived is not any different from that in any other public system around the province. I am wondering whether, because of their size, there are other public systems in the province where, even with the Bill 82 legislation, those opportunities are still not open for children with special needs.

1120

Mr. McBurney: I think that has been said here today, but that is not what we are majoring in. What we would like is that those facilities, however utilized, are accessible to all. I think what these letters and Mrs. Anjema have said is that it is being done effectively in their schools.

If you wanted to generalize about what makes an independent school—in fact, any school—effective, it is that it is based around some strong community idea that focuses the energy of the faculty and the supporting community in the execution of its goals. The other thing that the independent school generally has is small size. I think those are noteworthy goals for public education: that schools be organized around some community idea and that they be intimate in nature so that there is a caring development. The sharing of the ethic is what provides that in many independent and many public schools.

What is difficult is that some get the favour of public policy to do those things and others are denied it.

Mrs. Marland: You did refer to the importance of integration of special classes, and I think all of us on this committee and in this Legislature agree with that. Indeed, that is taking place in the public systems that I am familiar with in terms of the integration of children with special needs and special disabilities. That is done with the support of the community. That is the way it works, and it is working in a lot of the schools that I am familiar with.

There is no question about your point on the advantage of size. We all know that children learn better in a small, structured setting of six to 10 pupils. That was our own experience in our family.

You know, apparently, that it is questionable whether the two publicly funded systems that we have in Ontario today are affordable from the standpoint of the backlog in government funding for growth areas that are trying to build new schools within those two publicly funded systems. Coming from Peel I am very sensitive to that issue. What I have to ask you is, how can we respond, as a government, as legislators who are responsible to the public taxpayer, knowing that this is not a perfect world? If it was a perfect world, I would agree that everyone should have the choice of religion, of special needs, of small classes. But knowing that it is not a perfect world and there is not a money tree at Queen's Park, because our money tree comes from our tax base around the province, can you tell us how you see it?

I understand the equity aspect, because that is the basis of your argument. But since we all believe in and support equity, can you tell us how you would see that it is possible to fund the kind of request you are making in the light of today's shortage of money and the fact that people are finding it increasingly difficult to continue to pay their taxes and live in their homes?

Mr. Routledge: I might try to speak to that. As I understood it, the select committee was really dealing with the questions of philosophy and goals. Should you decide that the philosophy in education in Ontario is that the cultural and religious diversity should be honoured and there should be a parental factor of choice in the schools which the children attend, we believe the experience, which we have noted in other jurisdictions both in Canada and in some countries in Europe, would not be a wild swing to private schools. Therefore, you would be dealing with something like the numbers now.

The amount of money for that is not really significant. It becomes simply a matter of government priority. It is not a monstrous task. It really is a question of what the philosophy is to be. Is the philosophy to be that there is one fundamental system?

I think we grow up here in Ontario with the idea that, as God gave us the railways, he gave us the public school system. In actual fact, of course, that was brought into being by Egerton Ryerson with, some believe, the specific purpose to avoid the Catholics dominating a lot of things,

and that system is something we have grown up with.

Change is inevitable. Change has come. The fact is that the Catholic system is now funded through grade 13, we do have schools that recognize the needs of the initial inhabitants of this province and land, and we do have other special needs being recognized. If we are indeed recognizing the cultural diversity, we do make that the philosophy of education. We do recognize that there are not only the different cultures and the different religions, but there are all the different personalities and differences in the way children learn. And it is very difficult for one large system, largely controlled, as it has been in the past, by a central organization in Toronto to provide answers to all that. If we begin to move away from that as a matter of philosophy, then it becomes a matter of priority.

Mrs. Marland: Just a fast, final question. You did mention in your brief that there are five provinces that give formal support for independent education and I wondered if you could tell us which those provinces are and what you mean by formal supports for independent education?

Mr. Routledge: They have legislative arrangements, direct legislative arrangements. They are: British Columbia; Alberta; Saskatchewan, at the secondary level; Manitoba and Quebec. That list does not include, of course, the constitutional denominational system of Newfoundland, so you could say six. And the support ranges I suppose from 30 per cent of the operating grant to 80 per cent with some capital funding added in Saskatchewan.

Mrs. Marland: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. Just a point of clarification, Mr. McBurney. In your brief, you mentioned a question about the mandate of the select committee on education and your understanding was that it included a statement about the important roles of parents and guardians in the development. We have ordered a transcript of Hansard for April 13 which was the date on which we finalized the mandate, and later on in the same Hansard Mrs. O'Neill amended her original suggestion which included that and said that we could simplify it to just go on to "the full development of the student" as opposed to extending the statement, so that the final mandate as proposed by the committee was the one in which the clerk sent out the various invitations. So, we do have a copy after—

Mr. McBurney: Can you give me that Hansard reference, please, because I did not see that.

Madam Chairman: Yes. Page E-28 to page E-30 in the April 13 Hansard.

Mr. McBurney: Well, then I would ask whether it was just a stylistic omission because it is an important one in substance: What does this committee feel about the important role of parents in their children's education? It is my understanding that the public and private structures of education are both founded initially upon the prior right of parents to choose the kind of education their child shall be given. It might be worthwhile for the committee to re-include that basic provision in its reports, I think it needs to be seen. It is a very essential one because there is a body of people who believe that state rights supersede parental rights in education, and I think this committee is going to have to come down on one side of that. These are the kinds of things that can no longer be fudged in the nature of a debate.

Madam Chairman: Well, Mrs. O'Neill, would you like to comment on that?

Mrs. O'Neill: Well, I will certainly want to relook at the Hansard. I presume that must have come about as a result of discussion and how we were going to present this to the public, because I do believe very strongly that the first educator of the child is the parent and I do believe that parents have a role and I think they have a role in presentations to this committee. I certainly want that recorded. So, if we did change the statement and it is a committee mandate that we were coming up with, there must have been a reason. I did not, and I think I would have been disturbed enough to have remembered, feel that we were changing emphasis totally and that we were not going to include parents. As I say, I will reread that section. We do say a lot around here and sometimes we forget why we said it when we said it.

Mr. McBurney: Can you deal, as committee, at this early stage with some of the resources we have tried to share with you, notably the satisfactory instruction standard—you may have questions about that—and the principles which we have made part of our appendix, which deal with these very things and endeavour to bring about an appropriate balance of parental rights of choice and the government responsibility thereto, and the role of schools in also meeting, as a kind of media term, governmental requirement and parental needs?

We would like to talk, if you are prepared to do that, about those very things.

Madam Chairman: Well, I did have three other members who had specific questions. They may, indeed, be related to the comments you have just made. I have Mr. Reycraft, Mr. Jackson and Mr. Mahoney. We actually have approximately five minutes left and although I do not like to limit, we do have another presentation to follow.

Interjection.

Mr. Reycraft: Madam Chairman, on a point of order. I believe, with respect, because the gentleman is not near a microphone, Hansard will not be able to pick him up.

Madam Chairman: Yes, could you please come forward to a microphone and make your comment?

Mr. Reycraft: That was not really what I had in mind.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Why do we not just leave it as heard. We like to give a little bit of flexibility to this group, to be able to respond so that we take that into account, which is basically—

Mr. Hogg: That is right.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Hogg from the Family Coalition Party has indicated that they share your philosophy in this regard and would perhaps be willing to give up some of their time so we could continue the discussion. Is that correct, Mr. Hogg?

Mr. Hogg: Yes, again, as long as it does not eat into our time too much—

Madam Chairman: Well, I would propose then we extend the time for an additional 10 minutes, if that is acceptable? So, we will have 15 minutes more of the discussion. Thank you, Mr. Hogg. Mr. Reycraft, would you like to proceed?

Mr. Reycraft: The committee heard evidence from officials from the Ministry of Education on Monday, and Duncan Green, an assistant deputy minister, talked to us about a general shift in philosophy that was occurring across Canada and across the world, a shift from the view that education should serve the needs of the individual, should allow the individual to develop to the fullest of his or her human potential, to one where education should serve the needs of society. What I would like to know is what your association's view is of that. Do you believe that government has a responsibility for ensuring that the educational system prepares its people to be part of an internationally competitive society?

Do you see that as being a goal, an overall objective of an educational system?

Mr. McBurney: It could be, I think, one of the objectives. I think there is a great danger in making it the *sine qua non*. If you take the Premier's Council's first report, *Competing in a Global Economy*, our educational system is compared very unfavourably with the Japanese. So, we are told that we must have a technological, more scientific system with heavy emphasis on mathematical and linguistic skills, which are only two modes of learning in the student. Is the Premier's Council or the government, if that is its contemplation, prepared to accept a Japanese culture that saw five students beaten to death in their schools last year and another 190 teachers fired through an excess of corporal punishment zeal, or a society which is considered in many ways to be quite lockstep and chauvinistic? I think it is quite dangerous to allow this kind of motivation to become the dominant motivation.

Now, societies are made up of a variety of philosophies of education. There may be a shifting of philosophies of education, but I think it is very dangerous to believe that there is a philosophy shifting to some undifferentiated goal for society as a whole and that is economic in its direction.

Mr. Reycraft: The short answer to your question is no, I am sure the government is not; and the longer answer is that Mr. Green did point out to us that Japan was a jurisdiction where the opposite trend was evident, where indeed they are shifting their philosophy in the opposite direction. The Premier's Council report which I have compared us unfavourably, or at least not favourably, relative to a number of other jurisdictions as well. And the point was made there that the Ontario system, if we are going to be internationally competitive, will have to be better than average and yet, relative to a large number of jurisdictions, we were just exactly that. Do you not believe that the state has a responsibility for ensuring that its educational system prepares its people to be internationally competitive?

Mr. McBurney: I think the state has a responsibility to create the environments for education which lead to fully developed people who are capable, if they want to, of being effective economically. But the state is not a teacher; it has nothing to teach. That belongs to the educational communities, and they are driven by deep-down beliefs. Not everybody believes we have to be Japanese-competitive to be happy in this world or in Canada.

Mr. Routledge: May I add to that, please? I think it may well also deal with this question that education in Ontario does need a clear-cut philosophy, clear-cut goals, it does need a definition of satisfactory instruction and it does need some more harmony in all the various parts.

The schools to which I belong, the Waldorf schools, which is the largest independent school movement in the world, have as their goal, "Our highest endeavour must be to develop free human beings who are able, of themselves, to impart purpose and direction to their lives." Education goes far beyond training, it goes to the full development of the individual. A lot of independent schools support this, and I believe you would find many of the public schools believe that would be a fine philosophy.

Mr. Jackson: I appreciate Mr. Reycraft's persistent attempts to find someone to say something really positive about that section of the Premier's Council report; we will continue to seek out some advice in that regard.

I have a series of quick questions. Have you received any indication from the government with respect to when Mr. Shapiro will be allowed to respond to his own report?

Mrs. Priesnitz: We had in January some indication from Mr. Ward that perhaps this spring there would be some message from the government. The message has turned out to be no message. We have, indeed, experienced some difficulty similar to what we have experienced over the last 10 or 15 years. So no, we feel the whole issue has slipped, in terms of its priority, from the government's agenda.

Mr. Jackson: I guess the second question is for clarification on the matter of processing your two recommendations. One is that the select committee be reconstituted as an all-party select committee on alternative education. This would be impossible to do, given that we have a mandate now which we must complete, unless it is the decision of the government and/or the recommendation of this committee that we cease operations with respect to our complete agenda.

However, having clarified that, I think it is important to take the concept and determine its application to this committee's activities. It is your understanding, Lyle, therefore, that in so far as the first stage deals with philosophy, the fourth or fifth stage could deal with private schools specifically, and alternative education and the public funding.

Am I interpreting your question to this committee fairly? You are saying that at our very first window for this committee to deal with

public education, to make a statement of our goals in Ontario, we must be more specific with respect to whether we feel all children in this province should be eligible for a public education or not.

Mr. McBurney: I think it is very fundamental. I would hope the committee could, at least in principle, get that far. What our recommendation takes into account is that these issues are very sweeping and it is unlikely that this committee can come to definitive answers to the kinds of issues that are before it, reflected, I think, particularly through our association, in the period it has. It will need more time.

I understand there is precedent for what I suggested, but if the change of name is not appropriate and it simply continues as the all-party select committee on education, fine. What we are saying is that in order to bring something of worth to Ontario it is going to have to go into these issues in depth, and we expect that it should be able to do so.

Our own policy development as an association, quite frankly, is in advance of any of the parties represented at this table. That is why we share what we have. We do not say it is perfect, but we say that this committee or some other forum should call upon everyone with a vested interest in choice in education. That would include trustees, teachers and educational systems. The only requirement would be that they come with goodwill to say what are the conditions by which we can responsibly meet the social expectations of the people of Ontario.

The independent schools are part of that. Historically, it might well be that you need an independent school support act, just given the fact of where independent schools are in other kinds of choices.

1140

Mr. Jackson: How we do it is not nearly as important to this committee's activities in this first frame, because in the first frame we are dealing with what we, as representatives of the people, as government legislators, feel is the appropriate direction for education and who is included and who is not included. Basically, that gets to the nub of the question.

We really should be in a position to clarify that, as in my questioning on the separate school system as to whether or not we require two parallel sets of goals and objectives in education to reflect the distinct and unique nature of the separate system, albeit public. That is what I wanted to put in perspective. That, in my view, is the first challenge to this committee. We can

choose to be silent and refuse to deal with it, but I think it is clearly within our mandate to be examining that, or why did we invite you here in the first place?

The second point is that we may have an opportunity at some point in the future to put somewhere on—we understand the work of this committee to be a three-year agenda perhaps—our agenda your agenda particularly or the 66,000 students you represent at this table. That would be the opportunity for you to address the issue of how to implement.

Now I wish to suggest to you, Madam Chairman, that it will become essential for this government to announce in some fashion how it intends to deal with the Shapiro report, whether it wishes to simply bury it, similar to the Dryden report, whether it wishes to announce its findings or what it is going to be doing, because I for one feel it would be inappropriate for us to proceed and deal with the private school matter on our agenda if in fact the government is unwilling or unable to bring forward all the material that would be helpful to the committee; the same with pooling of industrial and commercial assessment.

That will help drive some of this committee's activity, based on the government's or the Ministry of Education's agenda; which is separate and distinct from this committee's activities, but there is a relationship. When Mr. Shapiro is here in the very last days of our public hearings on philosophy and goals, it is my intention to serve notice that I will be asking him in a very direct fashion and perhaps even presenting a resolution for this committee to consider with respect to the tabling of that report.

My final, and quick, question has to do with what you asked us if we could do and that was deal with your appendix and some of the comments. In appendix A, I would like you to clarify in your philosophical statement what you specifically mean by "a school that is chosen by his or her parents and that meets acceptable social and educational criteria." Can you help me with the word "acceptable"? You were dealing with standards in your formal presentation. I read the Shapiro report and I understand its context with respect to the curriculum. What does "acceptable" mean?

Mr. McBurney: Acceptable in the broadest achievable consensus. In our view, the manner of consultation should be codeterminative; that is to say, the people with a vested interest would be consulted to find the conditions that do justice on the broadest possible scale. Alongside that

philosophical statement, we have given you some principles at the current stage of the task force which endeavour to lay out what the responsibility of school governance and parents would be. There are other players in this, of course, so acceptable in the broadest possible sense.

It is not a perfect world but, typically, our perception is that government listens individually to the people who have come before it and is heavily influenced by the vote count or the public prominence they can command. Public education, for example, can command, through taxpayers' money, a very strong lobbying effort in the Coalition for Public Education and groups like it; then it descends, with a judgement made somewhere and this is what everybody gets. We question that.

We are talking here about a mediating manner of doing government whereby the involved people sit down together and, starting with something like this statement, which says that we are going to try together in Ontario to provide equity to the broadest number of people possible, we pick up our social reality, which shows us we have five or six systems, not two, and we ask, what do we do about these other people and the others in that system who want to develop fully their capacity to serve their communities?

So, from the statement, we think that you then move from your philosophy to your goals of education. The goals of education in Ontario can hardly be contested. They are general and excellent goals: to acquire the basic skills fundamental to one's continuing education; to develop and maintain competence and a sense of self-worth; to gain the knowledge and acquire the attitude that one needs for active participation in Canadian society, and to develop a moral and aesthetic sensitivity that is necessary for a complete and responsible life. Those are beautiful statements.

Madam Chairman: Mr. McBurney, could you wind up fairly quickly? The Family Coalition Party representatives have indicated that they are ready to commence.

Mr. McBurney: Yes, and I want to thank them, by the way, for being very generous with their own time.

In summation, I guess we simply say that Ontario has noble goals. It does need a philosophy for education which is universal in its scope. This committee can play a very important role. In fact, I think it has an obligation to play that role, which is to recommend or to become itself the forum for the kind of discussion that is required

so that the present preferential treatment which is given to some groups in public education in Ontario is replaced by a universalistic one; we extend it to a much broader range of people. We can give you good reasons why we think that is also a more efficient use of educational resources and all of that. But the starting place is a commitment to educational diversity and an ethic of choice by the government of Ontario and all the parties thereto.

Thank you very much.

Madam Chairman: Thank you for appearing before us today.

We will now go directly to the Family Coalition Party. Mr. Hogg, would you like to bring your delegation forward? After you are seated, would you like to introduce yourself for purposes of electronic Hansard? Thank you again for your forbearance with our previous submission. We will allot a little extra time in order that you can have your full quota.

FAMILY COALITION PARTY

Mr. Hogg: Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. I would like to proceed directly.

Madam Chairman and members of the select committee on education, we really appreciate your invitation to appear before you. The Family Coalition Party appreciates the opportunity to express views on such an important issue.

I would like to introduce us. I am David Hogg, the education critic for the Family Coalition Party, and this is Mr. DiRocco, who is the policy director. I am not going to read the document we have submitted; it would just take too long. But we would ask you to read the document in order to follow the lines and details of the arguments that we make.

I would like to tell you that it has been reviewed inside and outside the party and the recommendations in it have received very strong support. We are really here to persuade you to read the document in detail. You will understand that the document was prepared well before we had access to the remarks attributed to Duncan Green in the Toronto Star of yesterday. We are completely opposed to the views he expresses and we propose a course of action for the committee which will go a long way towards rectifying a situation that we see has gone awry. I will read three quotations from that article and then I will make three comments on them.

The first one says: "Schools are being pressured to set aside the development of students as individuals and to focus instead on producing graduates capable of landing a job, a Queen's

Park committee has heard." Our comment on that would be that the Family Coalition Party sees no conflict in the preparation of an individual for work and that individual's development; rather, we see it as an essential component.

1150

If you would please turn to page 5 of the report—the numbering is in the top right-hand corner—underneath the section that deals with mind, soul and body, I would like to quote from it. "Those who ignore the need to train for work and employment, which we see as fundamental and legitimate human activities, belittle the process. Those who believe that it is the only end impoverish it." We realize that there really has to be a meeting of minds on this, because if we take the position that is coming out of the ministry, then there is going to be continued conflict.

Let me go on to the second quotation: "These goals partly focus on instilling a passion for learning in students and developing creativity." At the risk of sounding somewhat cynical, the comment is, "Is that what happens in the general and basic streams?" Radwanski called these goals vague, subjective and diffuse. They fill the ministry with documents, which we list on page 3 of the report, and we have suggested particular readings out of that list. It is a long list, and the material in it is quite repetitive.

The final quotation is, "Green said that for decades there has been a tug-of-war between a school system that develops the human potential in students and one that slots them into the economy." Our comment is that we do not see the tension as a tug-of-war. We see it caused by a ministry that is unresponsive to the wishes of the people. No doubt you will remember having seen this particular article, where the level of acceptance of the Ontario education system is shown at 35 per cent, "a ministry that lives in a land of plausible, noble but unrealistic ideals in a land remote from reality." It is for that reason that we suggest you do not get embroiled too deeply in the argument over educational philosophy.

As you will see in our presentation, we believe it is unlikely that you will receive any new news. I do not think you will get any earth-shattering ideas that have never been mentioned before. People will go over what has been gone over before. What we would like to suggest to you is that if you choose to take that course, you will participate in an increase in frustration, a point that we make in the third paragraph, page 3, which starts off:

"The FCP understands the critical nature of the role played by the educational system. Yet what

we see is not an examination of the system"—with your committee—"but repeated reviews and reports on educational philosophy and direction. We would respectfully suggest the topic has been reviewed to death." Then I go on to make the comments that you have just heard.

What we would like to do is to take you at this point to the bottom of page 5, where we captured this particular idea between the dotted lines:

"The FCP cannot emphasize too strongly that this committee should look at the system, not only the philosophy, to find the reason for the concern. In particular, you should examine the manner in which the Ministry of Education operates as it directs education within the province. We believe such an examination would quickly expose many of the reasons for the major problems."

As a party, we want to concentrate on the practical actions that you can take, and I would ask you now to go to the second item in the executive summary on page 2, which draws your attention to the energy spent by teachers collecting what we refer to as paper qualifications. We see this activity, particularly when it is pursued in the evening, as an undesirable distraction. We make recommendations at the bottom of page 4 and the top of page 5, and you can read those at your leisure.

On page 6—and I would ask you to turn to that page, because this really contains the kernel of our recommendations on the problems within the system—we see four reasons as key reasons that the system is not operating effectively and there is not more public support: expectations of the system, misuse of affluence, ineffective administration and legislative overcontrol. What I would like to do now is to go very quickly through the items that are there.

As to expectations, education in Ontario has the reputation of being the most expensive in the world, but it is not perceived as being the best. Clearly, people accept that. I would make one exception here, Madam Chairman. I think possibly in the area of special education that Ontario has a leading position, and we certainly commend that.

We see affluence as a major problem. The system at present can and does afford countless studies and consultants. Having commissioned the studies and hired the consultants, the system, it appears, feels obligated to implement the findings or recommendations. This applies whether the results have value or not and whether the objectives have been carefully thought through or not.

We are going to draw your attention to two particular aspects here. One is the research contracts that have been let out and the other is curriculum review development and implementation, CRDI.

One of the things that the ministry supplied was a list of the research contracts that have been let out. It is a fairly comprehensive document, and I am sure that you can get hold of a copy should you so wish. It is a pity that Mr. Johnston has left, because one of the items he raised recently in the Legislature was the matter of educating deaf children.

In 1978, the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education received a grant of \$441,000 to study the factors operating during the education of profoundly deaf children. We found it absolutely amazing that the Ontario Association of the Deaf does not know the results of that research. They are not familiar with it. They rang me and asked me where they could get hold of them.

This is a very disturbing aspect: when there is more than \$10 million recorded in the sheets yet there is not more account of the money that is being spent here.

I would like to just hit on OAIP, the Ontario assessment instrument pool. This is the instrument that should have been testing whether CRDI was effective or not. In the math component, it appears that about \$200,000 was spent there and the ministry recommends that it not be used, that the results not be used.

The last item I am going to raise is this business of designing the Ontario student record card file folder. My question here is, why was it not sent out to professional form designers instead of \$100,000 being given to an institute?

The last item on this is that there are 230 contracts listed in these documents that I showed you. They range from \$550 to \$500,000, and yet 17 per cent, 38 of them, lie in the \$100 interval from \$14,900 to \$14,999. Clearly, what is happening here is that people are being encouraged to creep under the \$15,000 approval limit. We suggest that is not in the best interests of the taxpayer.

Mrs. Marland: Does that mean that \$15,000 is the tender limit?

Mr. Hogg: Clearly, there is some approval limit there. When you get a contract that is let out for \$14,999, nobody can estimate that accurately. It does not take any estimating ability to realize that; they have just chiselled underneath the \$15,000.

A thing maybe of more concern is CRDI. I am not sure how familiar members of the committee

are with this. The proponents of it recommend that it is a never-ending circle; that you review, you develop, you implement and then you review, develop and implement again.

One of the things I would recommend to the committee is to ask the ministry to produce all these documents, these guidelines, that result from CRDI activity within the ministry. If it comes to a pile less than 10 feet high, send them back to produce the rest of them. They are on all manner of topics, technological studies, business studies, discipline, behaviour.

We do not really see this as an effective method of controlling the curriculum. There are two methods that can be used. One is in very general use throughout the world, and that is to have a specific syllabus, a syllabus that the best intellects in the country or the jurisdiction can bring to bear on it. They produce a syllabus that tells the teachers where they have to go, the material that has to be known and the skills that have to be acquired; and then you test it afterwards.

1200

The alternative is to go down to a form of process control, which is what CRDI turns out to be. There you get into all the details of trying to control what the individual teachers are teaching, how they are teaching, what they should be using to teach, the views that they should be expecting when they teach. You get into a tremendous mess; not only a tremendous mess academically, but a very expensive mess as well. This is something that we really would stress with you, that this particular item is put under very rigorous scrutiny by your committee.

Finally on this item—I would like to stress this again—the FCP sees positive actions in both positions of looking for results and looking at the method and potential for equality of value. The positions are not mutually exclusive. Good pedagogy increases the likelihood of good results; testing for good results does not preclude good pedagogy. Objective testing is seen as a method of ensuring effective teaching, and CRDI is seen as a very clumsy way of promoting good pedagogy.

Now we would like to go on to administration, which is on page 9, and the concern here is that education in Ontario is an \$8-billion enterprise. In the private sector, the chief executive officer of such an enterprise would be paid in the range of \$500,000 to \$1 million. If we go to the Public Accounts of Ontario in 1986-87, we see that Dr. Shapiro is paid \$91,500. We believe that indicates the amount of business expertise that

we are getting. We are in no way criticizing Dr. Shapiro's knowledge of education. What we are doing is questioning whether he is an appropriate person to run an \$8-billion industry.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: That applies to all deputy ministers then I take it.

Mr. Hogg: Yes, it may well do. However, we concentrated on education.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: They might hire you. They might want you on their staff.

Mr. Hogg: The next point we would like to raise with you is overcontrol. We believe that the system is severely restrictive and we want to use one example, the situation that exists with school board business officials, which is on page 10.

The regulation was introduced in 1975—that is regulation 140—and it required, among other things, that people who wanted to become school board business officials had to sit a ministry written examination and an oral examination. That process produced 35 certified people by 1987. If you divide 35 by 12, you get 2.9, and I am told that there are 312 positions in the province that require that certification. Clearly, it is going to take over 100 years to produce certificated people to go into those positions.

These are positions that monitor these huge expenditures that go on within the province, and we certainly do not believe that is appropriate. Even worse, if you look at the Directory of Education which is published by the ministry—I am not going to go through it in too much detail—basically the situation is that as of this document, one in three of the senior public school business officials and one in two of the separate school senior business officials did not have a published business designation.

Very clearly, if you turn to page 11 where we list the number of applicants that are known for recent advertised positions, there is a lot of interest in these positions, so that the school boards should be able to get very highly qualified and able people provided the restrictions are removed.

Finally, we want to come on to something that I am sure you are expecting from us, the consideration of traditional family values. We are very supportive of the previous deputation's views on this matter. We believe that the parents are in fact the primary arbiters of education for their children.

We would go even further than that. One of the things that is sometimes seen is that educators tend to talk down a little to parents. They seem to forget that parents have been through the educational system. It is quite possible that there

are more intelligent people outside the ministry than inside the ministry. I do not want to propose that as a reality, but at least of equal intelligence outside. Therefore, these people who have undergone so much in education should be in a position to recognize the real thing when they see it.

We would recommend the items that are there at the bottom of page 11 for your particular attention.

Finally, in the summary, there are three points that are made. We ask you to support the teachers, provide more incentive to teach solidly and establish a sound core curriculum that will act as a firm base for students' future diversity.

I have an engineering background and I was teaching in the schools when the Hall-Dennis report was rampant—it was Thistletown Collegiate in Etobicoke. There was a printing section, which very few people benefited from. They had extremely expensive printing presses that they were operating. Now I hear people saying, "We have to get rid of all that and we have to go and get electronic equipment." Beware. I do not think this is necessary. I think it is much more important that we go to the basis which will allow future flexibility. I do not feel I am restricted because I had a core curriculum in my youth. I feel I can still keep up with those people who feel they are flexible.

Finally, there should be required objective performance tests. Without that, there is going to be no consistency across the province.

We view very critically the operation of the Ministry of Education with a view to improving its efficiency and effectiveness as a business unit. This should flow over to the school boards.

Finally, there should be increased school and family interaction.

That is the end of my presentation. I thank you for your patience. I would like to turn it over to Mr. DiRocco now, who will speak on parents' rights.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Hogg. I notice that you have taken a substantial amount of time for the first part of your presentation. In order to allow for questions from the members, perhaps the second part could be fairly concise. It is up to you, but I assume you want a dialogue between the members.

Mr. Hogg: Indeed.

Mr. DiRocco: How concise are you suggesting? Less than five minutes?

Madam Chairman: That sounds fine.

Mr. DiRocco: I think I should be able to do it.

First of all, I would like to say I am not an expert in the field of sex education. I am just using my common sense here, suggesting some things that are inappropriate and some solutions for these problems.

I think most people would agree that teen-age pregnancy and the teen-age abortion rate are undesirable things and that the spread of acquired immune deficiency syndrome and other sexually transmitted diseases is a serious problem in our society.

How do we solve these problems? In the past and in the present, comprehensive sex education courses have been suggested based on the following: teach the facts of life, teach them early, provide birth control information and birth control devices, especially condoms, and this will solve the problem.

I suggest this attitude has actually increased the problem, has made it worse. I suggest they are myths based on moral relativism and sexual permissiveness. Even the Premier (Mr. Peterson) of this province is guilty of suffering from these myths.

You are all aware of the story that appeared in the *Globe and Mail* in May in which Mr. Peterson is reported to have said to students in Atikokan, when speaking about the AIDS problem—that is on page 2 of my report—“AIDS is a preventable disease. If you catch it, it is nobody’s fault but your own.” To a student who asked, “Are you saying, ‘Do not have sex?’” the Premier is reported to have replied: “No, not at all. I am the last one to say that, but practise safe sex, and that means condoms must be used.”

There were no further qualifications. The appropriateness of teen-age sexual activity is taken for granted. So sexual responsibility comes down to using condoms. I suggest this is no responsibility at all.

What if you are 13 years old? What if you are not married? What if the person you are thinking about having sex with is your mother? I am sure Mr. Peterson did not want to suggest those things, but if you are a teenager in the audience, what conclusion are you supposed to come to?

The problems continue, as I say, not in spite of sex education but also because of it. Treatment, medical information and facts simply are not enough. Behaviour is the problem, not availability of contraceptives.

1210

Sexual activity is not good for children, so why not tell them so? We tell them smoking is no good for them. We tell them that doing drugs is no good for them. We do not tell them to practise

safe smoking by using filters. We do not tell them to practise safe drugs by using clean needles. We tell them not to do those things. So why not make a moral judgement, as we do in that case, with sexuality?

There is enormous pressure on teenagers to be sexually active. It is everywhere, in the media, in songs, on television, in commercials. The message is very simple, “If you are not sexually active, there is something wrong with you.” So there is a great pressure.

Why promote this permissiveness? We should be fostering self-restraint and sexual responsibility. It is not enough to say, “Here is the information; protect yourself,” and assume that the activity is going to take place. That actually condones and encourages it. The teenagers’ conclusion is inevitable, in my opinion. They will say: “They expect us to do it. They are showing us how to protect ourselves. The only problem is pregnancy and disease, and they are showing us how not to get pregnant and how not to get AIDS and still be sexually active, so what is wrong with it? We might as well go ahead and do it.”

I suggest that sex education, as it has been taught in a permissive way, has not reduced sexually transmitted diseases, it has not reduced the rate of pregnancy and it has actually led to more abortion. Why? I think it is because of the refusal to take a moral stand in many cases. It condones sexual activity. Obviously, if there is more sexual activity, there are going to be more problems as a result.

As I have pointed out on pages 2, 3 and following, it has led to more teen-age sexual activity, rampant sexually transmitted diseases, more abortion and health risks as a result of some birth control methods that are used. I do not have time to go into detail on all that. I trust you will read that very carefully.

In spite of these failures, there are people now who want to have school-based clinics, as they have in the United States. There was a report in the newspaper very recently about the regional health unit in Ottawa wanting to set up a school-based clinic there. I suggest that would be very dangerous. I point out what happens in the United States on page 6—this is where parents’ rights come in as well—and the kind of counselling that is done there. We know teenagers need a note from parents to explain a day’s absence, but teenagers can get birth control information, condoms, pills, abortion referrals without the parents’ consent. That is absolutely scandalous.

Another reason why sex education has failed in many cases is that it is done very prematurely and explicitly. This breaks down natural modesty, arouses sexual interest and encourages experimentation.

I would urge you very strongly to read the article that I have appended at the end of my presentation by Dr. Melvin Anchell. This three-page article explains much better than I can the problems of premature sexual education.

Where do you go from here? I think what you have to do is involve the parents as much as possible. Sexual education is the primary responsibility of parents. They should be informed and their consent should be sought for anything that is done in this area. This is not happening in Ontario.

I would point out to you these two booklets: *Sex Education: A Review of the Literature from Canada, the United States, Britain and Sweden*—this was published two years ago—and this one, which was just published about a month ago, *Sex Education in Canada: A Survey of Policies and Programs*. These were both done by the Human Life Research Institute in Toronto.

This was based on a questionnaire that was sent to school boards across Canada. They have come up with conclusions that coincide with my own or that would substantiate my own as I am pointing them out to you.

In conclusion, since we do not have very much time, I would offer the following: Treatment is not enough and medical information is not enough. We need a change in behaviour. AIDS and venereal diseases are due to behavioural moral problems. They are the result of behaviour that is avoidable and unnecessary.

Medical and health information is not enough. We need motivation to move people to a more mature and healthier physical and moral lifestyle. Irresponsible sexual activity is unhealthy physically and morally; so let us stop perpetuating the myth that sexual responsibility means using condoms. Abstinence or chastity is a positive, achievable way of living, and not just to avoid diseases. Either we teach young people a sensible code of sexual ethics or young people and society will have to pay enormous costs in personal pain, psychological scars, increased welfare costs and skyrocketing health care costs.

We are now open for questions. Was that fast enough?

Madam Chairman: Thank you. Just before I go on to accept questions, I want to make a comment on your statement that we do not need a review of goals and philosophies, what we need

to do is examine the system. As Mr. Jackson indicated earlier, we are anticipating that the select committee on education will have somewhere in the neighbourhood of perhaps a three-year mandate, at which time we will indeed be examining the system. In fact, in September you will find that we are going to be looking at streaming, semestering, curriculum and grade promotion, so that we are going to get very specific. But the committee felt it important, before we go into the specifics, to get an overall viewpoint of where we have been, where we are today and where educators think we should be going. That is the reason for the focus on the goals and philosophy. We did not intend it to be a navel-gazing exercise, but a prelude to what we consider to be a very important mandate.

I will now open it up and ask for questions.

Mr. Hogg: I understand that. If you read the report, you will see that it is not only philosophy of education. That was the statement that was made. I appreciate what you have said.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Hogg. Do we have questions from the members? You have left us absolutely speechless. Mr. Keyes?

Mr. Keyes: We have a moment or two. I suggest that one of the things you did say, I suppose I am saying it tongue in cheek, is that we probably will not discover anything new as we sit and listen over the month. I suggest to you that your presentation is something totally new and an approach that I have not quite heard before. Some of its views are those, I presume, expressed by the Family Coalition Party, with which I have had no connection whatsoever. Certainly, they do harken back to a much more pioneer day in society, in my opinion, as I listened to them.

In one of the areas that I gather from a lot of the statement you have made, you would, I assume, have fairly strong support for much of the Radwanski report that recently came out. As I listened to you, you seemed to suggest you like the idea of standardized testing to determine whether people have made progress. You seem to suggest that we should have core curriculum so that we are basically all educated, to a certain degree, the very same way. Have you had the chance to read through Radwanski? You may have but I do not know that you are going to be back before us again. Is it fair to say that you are probably a fairly strong supporter of some of his major recommendations?

Mr. Hogg: Yes, I read the whole report and there is excellent material in it.

One of the things you may not know is that I taught for 10 years, so this is not an uneducated view, and Mr. DiRocco is a teacher. We have had some experience and the position is that there is general support for Radwanski.

Mr. Keyes: Within your party?

Mr. Hogg: Yes.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Just a very brief comment because I never know with presentations like this whether it is better to not express one's point of view or whether that communicates a feeling that there is a lot of committee member support for the point of view that you put forward, especially on the latter presentation.

I would just suggest that you review some of your statistics and some of your assumptions. I think there was an assumption that seems to underlie what you are saying, that family planning clinics or family planning education, for example, does not do anything other than promote sexual activity and abortions. The fact of the matter is statistics in Ontario clearly show that in communities where there has been family planning clinics, the rate of teen-age pregnancy decreases considerably. It is clear that information that is provided does prevent problems.

I think the approach that you take is one of a very middle-class, old-fashioned point of view which is not applicable to many of the kids that I used to work with when I was at children's aid. If I, quite frankly, took the position that you did with some of the teenagers that I worked with at children's aid, there would be one of two responses, with the teenagers. One would be, "Yes, Dave, I'll do that," and then go and giggle behind my back or they would have just told me how out to lunch it was and their sexual activity would continue. I am not quite sure what that would accomplish other than ongoing problems for those teenagers as they get older.

My approach was then and still would be that it makes a lot more sense to talk to the individual about contraception and birth prevention, rather than having this child, teenager, become pregnant. Some of the assumptions you make, some of the publications that your group and allied groups produce is very biased research. I have prepared and have read many of your publications and that of your allied groups. I suggest that you might want to read some of the other side's

objective statistics and you might, if you have an open mind, come to a final conclusion or a different conclusion to what you have reached at this point.

One thing that might have been accomplished by the presentation by the Family Coalition Party today is that I am sure that every deputy minister in the government will be wanting his political freedom and will want to join the FCP.

Mr. Hogg: Madam Chairman, I would like to address some remarks to Mr. Cooke. I think he is looking at it after the amputation. What Mr. DiRocco was saying is that early sex education will not improve the model structure or the behavioural structure of society. What he is recommending is that the introduction of this into the school system at very early ages, as early as grade 3 and grade 4, I believe—in fact, maybe even in grade 1—is completely inappropriate, and then you get the situation Mr. Cooke is referring to.

To focus in after the problem has occurred and say, "Your recommendations won't be effective," I think is misreading the situation. If the appropriate model standards are put in place where restraint and chastity, which are certainly not for the weak but for the strong, if those are put in place, they ennoble the dignity of the human person. There will be an improvement and then the problems that Mr. Cooke has to deal with later on will be reduced much more effectively.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Cooke, did you have a comment?

Mr. D. S. Cooke: No, I do not think we are going to have success in convincing one another.

Madam Chairman: If there are no other questions from the committee members, I would like to thank you, Mr. Hogg and Mr. DiRocco, for appearing before us today. Even though all of your opinions may not necessarily be those of the committee members, we do appreciate your time and the fact that you have pointed out some very interesting facts. Thank you for your appearance.

Mr. DiRocco: You are welcome.

Mr. Hogg: Thank you very much, Madam Chairman and members.

The committee recessed at 12:23 p.m.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The committee resumed at 2:15 p.m. in room 151.

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS OF EDUCATION (continued)

Madam Chairman: Welcome to this afternoon's session of the select committee on education. We have been slightly delayed, but our next presenters, the Chiefs of Ontario, have just arrived. Chief Gordon Peters, perhaps you would like to come forward with your delegation and, once you are seated, introduce them for purposes of Hansard. Welcome.

CHIEFS OF ONTARIO

Chief Peters: With me today is Joanna Simonetta. She is one of the policy analysts from the Chiefs of Ontario. My name is Gordon Peters. I am the regional chief of the Assembly of First Nations representing Ontario. Do you want me just to proceed with our presentation?

Madam Chairman: Yes. I understand that you do not have a written presentation for the members, so just proceed and allow sufficient time at the end for members to ask questions of you.

Chief Peters: First of all, my apologies for not having a written document for this afternoon. As you know, with some of the work we do within our organization, we have a lot of difficulty co-ordinating various aspects of positions that we have. Of course, that is very uncommon in committees and government structures; so I am sure that will take care of itself.

From our perspective, we had a lot of difficulty in coming to terms with how we would approach this committee this afternoon in trying to deal with the kinds of education philosophies, because as we saw the philosophies and the mandate that were being put forward to us and the kind of discussions that would occur here this afternoon, we found they pertained more to the individual right of people, as opposed to the collective right that we as aboriginal people in this country were struggling for.

Based on that statement, I think the remarks I will make this afternoon will have a direct bearing on the kind of philosophies we have as the first nations and where we think we should be proceeding in regard to the education process in our relationship with Ontario and its system.

I want to thank the committee for the opportunity this afternoon to talk about the education of our children, our young citizens who will be charged with the responsibility of ensuring our survival as people within this country.

As our children grow and learn, it is crucial that their educational environment stress and reinforce their uniqueness. They must fully understand who they are, that they are citizens of the first nations of this land, that they have languages, cultures and values which are unique, that they have a crucial role to play in our self-governance and in determining the recognition of and the respect for the rightful place for first nations in this country.

We are over 100,000 strong in Ontario and our numbers are growing every day. A large portion of our population is young. The educational system in which they are placed must make them strong and proud of who they are and confident in their worth and ability.

An education system based on first nations' philosophies and values will allow our children to fully develop as human beings and to realize their full potential and give our children choices regarding their personal futures and the ability to make those choices wisely, allowing our children to grow into thoughtful, considerate and respectful adults who will strengthen our first nations and participate in our evolution. The education goals we have for our children are significantly different from those of the various societies that share this land. Only we can determine the best means of achieving these goals and the overall approach to total education that forms the basis of our education philosophies.

A critical component in our total education is the maintenance and enhancement of our languages. It is essential that you understand the importance of our languages and the role language has to play in the full development of our children. The most crucial elements of our history and cultures can be transmitted only through our own languages.

1420

Language is a gift from the Creator. Language expresses our unique relationship with the Creator, our attitudes, our beliefs and our values. Our future depends on the survival of our spirituality, our land, our knowledge and skills,

our traditions and cultures, all of which are linked to our languages.

Language belongs to the people. Its preservation, revival and maintenance must come from the people. Protective measures and revitalization efforts are now being undertaken, using the most advanced technology currently available.

When our people have expressed a desire to have our languages taught in the schools our children attend, the province must accommodate that request. Depending on the community, this could range from having language as one subject in the curriculum to having the aboriginal language as the first language of instruction.

We insist that the number of students participating in the program not be the deciding factor when the province is considering the cost of implementing these programs. When parents choose the provincial system for the education of our children, this does not mean that we are relinquishing any of our responsibility. We want our children taught with emphasis on skills development, how to use reasoning and decision-making, encouragement of creativity, imagination and feelings; generally a holistic approach to thinking and learning.

The provincial school curriculum must recognize Indian culture, values, customs and language and the Indian contributions to the development of this country. Courses in Indian history and culture should promote pride in Indian children and respect in the children of other societies.

Using curriculum as a means to achieve our educational goals, we want to develop a program that will maintain balance and relevancy between academic-skill subjects and Indian cultural subjects. Aboriginal content and curriculum must be compulsory and not left as an option to be used at the discretion of local schools. We believe compulsory use of Indian-developed curriculum would benefit all students.

Where Indian students must leave the reserve for completion of part or all of their formal education, the province should be aware of the additional burden placed on those children to be academically successful. Not only are our children dealing in a different society in which they must live, but they are also dealing with a very different learning environment. Suddenly they are without the constant encouragement of their home and the community that reinforces their successes and lends a hand in facing life's challenges. The pressure to be successful increases when the crucial development years have been spent away from home and community.

To relieve this pressure and to provide our children with the support they need, it is critical that there be mandated aboriginal content and curriculum development and that it be, where possible, delivered by aboriginal people.

First nations in Ontario have educational institutions that deliver post-secondary programs, using curriculum designed and developed by aboriginal people. These programs meet the provincial requirements for accreditation and also respond to the needs identified by the first nations. The Indian institutions actively involved in delivering these programs must be affiliated with chartered institutions for students to receive accreditation. This is not acceptable to our first nations in Ontario.

The Ministry of Colleges and Universities has recently indicated it is willing to look at a strategy related to native post-secondary education. We view this as a positive gesture which will naturally include the principle of certification for Indian post-secondary institutions.

Education is the passing down of the collective knowledge of the older generation to the succeeding generation. Our elders are a natural link to this collective knowledge and, therefore, crucial to the survival of our nations. Elders are the keepers of knowledge and a valuable resource that must be included in all aspects of education.

The education of our first-nation citizens is both a treaty and aboriginal right. Consistent with our goal of self determination, we must demand full recognition and respect for first nations' jurisdiction and control over this key component of our lives.

As we move towards the realization of our goals, we are asking for your co-operation, particularly in the provincial school systems, to promote and implement an education process that best serves the needs of our first nations, as defined by us. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Chief Peters. Does that conclude the presentation? Are you open now for questions from the members?

Chief Peters: Yes.

Maybe before that, I have just a couple of afterthoughts in relation to the presentation. I want the committee to be aware that some of the things we did not address in the kinds of philosophies we were dealing with are the administrative matters that are related to the federal-provincial jurisdiction on schools, Indian responsibilities through the federal government and dealing with the school boards through tuition agreements; those sections we did not deal with. We did not want to deal with, but we

wanted to make people aware of, the alternative school systems that have gone into place in some communities that are not funded either by federal or provincial governments but by communities, and the immersion language programs that are consistent with those schools.

I guess the last part that I did not address was what we should do in relation to ongoing direction as we see our own involvement in this process, in the proposed study, if we are to be making presentations to this committee. Further, there has to be a role for first nations directly in the decision-making process that goes on in regard to the education of our children. We assume that people recognize that to be a natural right of people, to be able to have participation and direct control over what is taught to their children and how it is taught to their children. We assume, as members of first nations, that we also have the right to be able to do that with our children as it relates directly to our culture and our languages.

Those are just some of the afterthoughts I have had on the presentation.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Chief Peters, the issue of collective versus individualist approaches to establishing goals for education is one that has come up with other groups as well. I gather that what you are saying is that, from your perspective, the first nations perspective, your collective goals for self-determination are all bound up within the educational process as well, and that that kind of statement of basic control of the education of your young people, whether it is on reserve or off reserve, is crucial. I gather that because we in our jurisdiction are not dealing so much with the on-reserve situation as we are with the off-reserve situation, I gather.

Chief Peters: Yes. It is very clear to us when we talk about our collective right that, until that is fully recognized, it virtually becomes impossible for us to deal with the individual rights of our people on the basis of how it pertains to our own development as first nations.

The biggest crunch for us comes in the jurisdictional dispute between the federal government and the provinces, the reality being that once our children leave the reserve, the federal government says that we are no longer responsible for children who are off the reserve. You no longer fund them, so they have to be funded some way. The province picks up some of them in the school systems.

The other avenue left to us for our children is that we make collective agreements with the school boards in each of the regions to take our

children in, but we find ourselves caught in almost a catch 22 in that situation, where we have absolutely no control over the dollars. That makes it impossible for us to be able to negotiate with the school boards for any kind of curriculum change that we need. Until we are able to do that on a collective basis and be able to negotiate directly for services that we need and the kinds of services that meet our requirements, it is very difficult to talk about individual rights.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: If I can just pursue that for a second, I am going to come back to some of the other underlying issues. This spring we actually dealt with the questions of governance and election of school boards. One of the issues that was not dealt with by the government at that time was this issue of the purchase of service by various bands from boards for programs outside the reserve, and the limitation under the Education Act is that you get a maximum of two representatives on any board to be able to see that things you want are brought in. As you say, there is fair limitation on your powers to actually get things through.

Have you been contacted by the provincial government? They told me when I raised this in the House that they would be contacting you to try to work out some amendments possibly to the act that would give more influence to native leaders, specifically in areas where the majority of kids in a school might very well be Indian.

Chief Peters: We have not been contacted specifically within the Chiefs of Ontario to deal with the question you have raised, but we have been pushing for quite some time to have some amendments made to the act, I guess ever since we first recognized that there could be any representation on school boards.

1430

The problem you raise and the concern that you raised at the end of your remarks mean that we have situations where we do have almost a total majority of Indian children in the schools, and yet we have no control over the board. The board has still majority non-Indian control. Those limitations within the act still do affect how we are able to participate at that level.

I guess the growing concern that we have in the dispute over first nations' jurisdiction and federal and provincial jurisdiction is whether we should participate at all in the Education Act and whether it is appropriate that elements of our participation be contained in that act or whether there should be outside agreements between the heads of governments to be able to negotiate effectively how those representations will occur

without having to be part of the boards themselves directly.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: If I could, I would like to stay away from that issue a little bit, having a fair amount of experience with the Child and Family Services Act and how we would go about that at that time and, if I could, just ask you to make a few comments about some of the seeming results of the present education system on native kids.

It would appear that our system has essentially failed native kids more than most other groups in society that can be identified in terms of the percentage that actually completes high school, the percentage that goes on to post-secondary education, any of those kinds of demarcations of whether a system is working. I wonder if you have any comments to make about that in or outside the context of the collective control question that you have already raised.

Chief Peters: I think we have seen positive results out of the education process and negative results, a positive result being that the level of students who are maintained and continue through school now has certainly increased. Ten years ago, we were dealing with the level of grade 3 and grade 4. We are currently dealing with a level for aboriginal people of approximately grade 8. That has increased, but beyond that, there are more children in the secondary and post-secondary levels. Unfortunately, the problem has occurred, first, because we have not been able to deal with any of the kind of cultural or language aspects within the existing system. There has been almost a total loss of language in southern Ontario.

Also, I guess the historical significance of what our people have done and contributed to this country and its development has not been taught in the school system. When we talk about the dignity and pride of our people, a lot of that is lacking because the true history is not being accurately reflected. As a result, a lot of the professional people whom we do develop do not return to our communities. I would say we lose probably over 80 per cent of our professional people, not only to private business but we lose a vast majority of them, whom we train at the community level after they complete university. We lose them to both federal and provincial governments, different agencies that service Indian people across the country.

So it is good and it is bad. We would like to find some way to be able to put some standards in place so that we are able to deal effectively with the way we would see development taking place for our citizens.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I have just two questions, if I may. Can you tell us how many boards you have agreements with or even how many reserve schools in Ontario are actually providing, as a language of instruction, Ojibway, Mohawk or whatever? How many are there? Do we know how many boards actually provide it as a language of instruction, or how many do it as a heritage language?

Chief Peters: I would not have an accurate figure on that.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is not many, I would imagine.

Chief Peters: There are very few.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I wonder we if can try to get that kind of information from the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward). Would that be possible, Madam Chairman?

Madam Chairman: We will certainly make that inquiry and see if the information is available.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The distinction would be in terms of heritage-language offerings and those that are done as languages of instruction as well. It would be interesting to have that information.

I guess the final question I have is whether or not you believe the system of education we have now is, in a passive or active way, racist in the sense of not allowing full expression and control of the education system for your pupils, whether it is in terms of being able to promote the language or to provide a positive interpretation of history.

Chief Peters: It is very difficult to designate one society's objectives as being discriminatory towards another's. I think it is more discriminatory as opposed to racist, simply because I think it comes from an uninformed position on how to deal with the first citizens of this land.

I think the provincial systems that have gone into place had no idea how to deal with our children in any manner, in any way. When we were dealing with it through the federal responsibility, in the schools that were set up prior to moving into the provincial system, basically they were federally run schools at the community level. They were operated mostly as farms, as residential schools where children had to move from different communities, out of their homes and into those institutions. Those institutions stayed alive until the early 1960s. I think the last institution in southern Ontario was the Mohawk institution in Brantford and I think that went out in early 1962 or 1963.

You are looking at a process that in dealing with our people totally dominated one segment through its educational process and did not give them the opportunity to express. I do not know if you could actually call it racist, because I do not know if the intent was there originally to do that, but I think some of the long-range policies that were in place definitely were racist in nature as an overall approach to dealing with the aboriginal people in Canada. I think those kinds of attitudes have been maintained and are still being maintained today in 1988 in the province of Ontario and in the country of Canada.

Mrs. Marland: Chief Peters, first of all I want to commend you on your presentation this afternoon. You and I have met before on the front steps of the Legislature, dealing with various issues for our native people in Ontario. May I also say that I share some of your very real concerns and I think the succinct way you made your presentation this afternoon was excellent because it made it very clear. Not always are presentations so clear.

My concern is that when you talk about the fact that once the children of the native families leave the reserve their educational costs are not always met or ever met—I do not know. It does not matter; if they were not always met, it is bad enough. Would it be true that sometimes or very often those children leave the school facility or the school opportunity, whatever it is, that is on the reservation because what is being offered there is not what they need and they have to go elsewhere to meet their needs? Is that your concern?

Chief Peters: It is part of our major concern, because in the system the way it is structured right now there are three avenues our children can use. There is the provincial school system, where we have agreements. There are federally operated schools at the community level. Then there are band-operated schools. Those three, as I listed them, are also listed in the same priority of funding, so that when our Indian children go to provincial schools, the federal government pays the whole shot for the tuition, the whole cost arrangement that is done with the school boards. The costs are significantly higher than what they pay for the federally run schools which they run themselves—the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development—on the reserve.

1440

The third category, which is our band-operated schools that we try to run ourselves, is the least funded. They are funded in terms of provincial curricula, because there are no federal

standards for dealing with on-reserve school systems. When we move into the area of trying to develop our own standards and our own curricula, we run into a great deal of difficulty, such as the federal government not paying because we do not meet certain criteria that it sets out as being the criteria for its agreements.

The difficulty is still there in doing language programs. One would assume with the language program that was being done on the Indian reserves through either a federal or a band-operated school would have the luxury of having its own language in the core curriculum, or even of trying to deal with an immersion course, but it is not true. They do not have that ability because they are following a provincial curriculum that is already established.

The fact that children leave communities, whether it be for education or for other reasons, and the payment—today, through most avenues, the payment is there; that happens, yes—but the fact is there is still the problem of our children leaving the schools.

In northern Ontario, for example, a majority of our children leave the community and go to school off the reserve. Once they hit high school, most of them move into the surrounding towns and cities. By the time children are 12 years old, they are gone from home, and it is very difficult trying to survive out there. First of all, if you come out of northern Ontario and you speak a native language and you come into a school system that does not afford you the luxury of being able to deal with your own language, you are running into the same kind of problem again.

Mrs. Marland: That actually leads into the next question I have. When you were talking about having the native language as the first language of instruction in the school, I wanted to ask you where you see that as an advantage to those children.

You were just explaining that when they come out of their home community, they have to survive somewhere else. In their relocation, do you feel that if their native language is their first language of instruction, they end up being as equipped as they need to be to survive in an English-dominated province, especially in Ontario, in terms of the rest of their education and/or their business and professional lives afterwards?

Chief Peters: From our point of view right now, the fact that we start talking about our own languages being the first language of instruction is because we have had some pilot projects across Canada and it has become very evident from the studies that have been done that the retention rate

among our children is vastly improved by dealing with their own language as the first language of instruction.

Does it benefit people, being able to speak their own language and being able to learn their own language? Certainly, because our languages and our concepts of our languages are totally different from the concept of English. I would have difficulty explaining to you exactly the way we deal with things in a language situation. For instance, we would say something that in our language would be funny to us that would have absolutely no bearing, would mean nothing in English. If you said it in English, it would not have any humorous effect whatsoever.

There is a whole different element to the language itself, and to the benefit of those people who are fluent in the language. I believe we have many times heard a lot of people who have stated very clearly that in order for a culture to survive, the language has to survive. If we are talking about dignity, respect and survival as Indian people, language becomes a crucial element for our survival.

Mrs. Marland: I recognize the very real significance of the historical perspective as you address it, and I am very sympathetic to the necessity for that historical significance to be carried on.

As my final question, you mentioned the aspect that your professional people who go on to professions and post-secondary education have currently ended up working at different levels of government. I am sure there are any number of times when that is a very real advantage because you finally have someone in government with whom to work. When you have to work with government here, you finally at least have someone in government who understands your own perspective.

Is what you are saying in that particular argument, Chief Peters, that you would like to see more professional people and more post-secondary opportunities for your children in order that you do not lose all of them to government, where it is an advantage for you, but you still have some who are able to come back to serve and work in the home community?

Chief Peters: I guess there were two points I was trying to make. First, the fact that we have Indian people who are involved with the government does not, from our perspective, mean those people will be beneficial to the outcome of any kind of discussions with the government. We have had a lot of experience in the past dealing with the fact that sometimes our own people

working in the government are harder to deal with than non-Indian people.

The second part of that is that not only do we need more professionals, but also we need to utilize the existing resources we have. We could utilize those resources if we actually got into the kind of transfer process the governments are talking about. Instead of having departments and schools in different areas hiring Indian people to develop policy that Indian people are rejecting across the country, it would make more sense if the agreements that are worked out would allow those professional people to come back and be able to deal directly with the communities to be able to provide direction from the communities in building those kinds of programs that are going to be acceptable to native people, so that you do not produce something that never gets utilized and gets fought against.

It also uses our people to fight against our own people. It would make more sense if we get involved in that kind of movement as opposed to trying to strengthen the number of Indian people who work within the government structures.

Mrs. O'Neill: Mr. Jackson this morning said he was dating himself when he talked about being the first person to go to university from his area in 1964.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Johnston.

Mrs. O'Neill: Johnston; sorry.

Mr. Jackson: You can call him Jackson.

Mrs. O'Neill: I am sorry, Mr. Jackson. I guess I am getting very—Mr. Johnston made this revelation. I now will say that I was actually teaching in the secondary school system at that point. I was part of this experience you mentioned where the residential or farm schools, as you suggest, were closed. Some Indian children were coming into my classroom and I know that was a next-to-impossible situation in 1964. I hope it is not quite as impossible, and you suggest that it is not quite as impossible, in 1988, that there are very good relationships in some classrooms with Indian students at the secondary level.

You are represented on some school boards in the province and your needs are attended to by some boards. What I would like to ask of you is, are there any models that are better than others? I do not want you to name boards because I do not think that would be useful, but are there some situations that are successful that we could look to? I think it is always better if we can be a little more specific. I really appreciate the way and the sincerity with which you have tried to bring your

concerns to us today. I ask you if you could be a little more specific, and you have been regarding language. Is there any other model or structure or strategy that you say we should look to and try to promulgate from this central Toronto office, so to speak?

Chief Peters: From the position we come from and dealing with that question directly, I guess we can only go so far in dealing with the school boards. As to the kind of curriculum we are trying to generate in our community, the kind of development we want for our people, the school boards can only go so far with that development. To this point, there has naturally been a lot of reluctance in dealing with those kinds of programs across the board.

1450

We have some models that are in place dealing with the school boards. The Belleville area in eastern Ontario is one in particular where the reserves do deal directly with the school boards and have a good ongoing relationship with the school boards. They have members on the school boards who are part of a program that designs some parts of the curriculum in the language and other areas. For a lot of the other school boards, I could not give you an adequate response as to how effective they are in those particular areas.

Mrs. O'Neill: Are you suggesting then that in some areas there are curriculum writers and people who are able to put your thoughts, goals and philosophies on paper and sell them to a school boards where the school boards put supports in for that kind of interaction, and that is really the kind of co-operation you need?

Chief Peters: Yes.

Mrs. O'Neill: You are then suggesting that some boards are more willing to put funding into that kind of endeavour.

Chief Peters: Sure. We have all kinds of curriculum writers. We have all kinds of people who can do the jobs that are there right now. It is not a question of not being able to produce what we have; it is a question of being able to deal effectively with the school boards to be able to put those things into operation.

The school boards are practically autonomous in how they deal across Ontario, so you do not get a best-model situation. You get the best negotiated one you can have with each board. Generally, what turns up are the kinds of attitudes people have dealt with. If you have dealt longer with one school board than another school board, you may get some better results and vice versa.

Madam Chairman: Mrs. O'Neill, do you have any further questions?

Mrs. O'Neill: No. I think I have had sufficient. I would not want to start into another entry in the way I did on that one. I will leave it for now.

Mr. Reycraft: How much autonomy do band councils have relative to education and schools on reserves? Are they subject to guidelines laid down by a federal department or are they free to devise a curriculum themselves?

Chief Peters: As I was suggesting earlier, there is very little ability for the community to be able to develop and institute the kind of programs it needs. A lot of the curriculum development and the criteria that go into place are very limited because the financial arrangements that take place actually limit the development that is taken on by the community.

There is very little control at the community level over those areas. Only in the last two to two and a half years has the federal government been talking about greater transfer of authority within education, which would allow schools greater control over what they do in the area of curriculum development. The schools that have just recently taken over, within the last couple of years, are the schools that have been able to benefit from that kind of control, but any school that has been in operation for more than two years is still stuck under the same agreements that were exercised before and have a minimal amount of control over their development.

Mr. Reycraft: Did I understand you to say there are some schools where an Indian language or native language is a language of instruction, where that has been tried?

Chief Peters: Yes, there have been places in Ontario and in Quebec and the western provinces, including Alberta. That is where some of the studies were done in relation to the retention levels that I spoke about earlier.

Mr. Reycraft: Do you know where it has been attempted in Ontario?

Chief Peters: St. Regis Akwesasne.

Mr. Reycraft: How long ago was that attempted? Is it a relatively new program?

Chief Peters: No. It is maybe eight or 10 years old. The problem with it, though, as I said about the agreements that have been in place for quite some time, is the fact that when they have instituted and gone into the development of their own curriculum, they have refused to provide the funding for it. What they have done is they have said: "There is a federally run school, whether it

is band-operated or not, that is there. This is what is going to be developed, and if you take your own curriculum and your own languages and put them into effect, we are going to fund this school; we are not going to fund yours."

Mr. Keyes: This follows slightly on what Mr. Reyecraft has been speaking about. I think the challenge to the government might be to find some way of providing the old, usual financial incentive to boards that are willing to negotiate and provide the type of programming that you people would desire, that might be outside of the federal band schools, but I am of the opinion that any of these things are literally possible within the system as long as there are the appropriate incentives or the willingness by both parties to negotiate it.

I wonder, Gordon, whether you have spent any time looking at the aims and goals of education as put out by the province of Ontario, the 13 goals, and then analysed them from the point of view of first nations to see whether or not there are any major restrictions there that prevent you from reaching many of the goals that you want for your own people. In my opinion, the goals have always been written so generally that most desires of society, of any significant group in the society, can be met within those goals. It really is a determination of the parties involved to negotiate and the government then can provide the means through one incentive or another. Have you looked at them at all and tried to analyse them from that point of view?

Chief Peters: Over a period of years, as I said earlier, we have not had any other choices to deal with other than the goals, the criteria and standards that are being set by the province because the federal government did not have any standards in dealing with the school systems at the community level. So we were always forced to interact and to deal with the goals that were seen by Ontario as what it wanted for its citizens.

Mr. Keyes: But what of the restriction in curriculum, in a sense, and in programs? I am trying to get to the other side of the goals we have set for people, the respect for other races, the development of creativity and thinking. You seem to say that things you want for your own people really fit exactly into the goals that have been enunciated in 1982.

Chief Peters: The difficult part with that, as you know, is that in the process of negotiations that we have gone through in Ontario in the last 10 years, in dealing with all areas, not only with education but all the other items combined, it becomes very difficult for us to be able to say that

there is a political willingness on the part of the provincial government to enact the kind of systems that could be developed under the existing criteria that are there.

It is possible to develop those under the existing criteria. The door is open there for that to occur, but the acceptance of that as a product and the implementation of it are where we have difficulty. You yourselves know, in the kind of dealings we have had in years past, that there always seems to be a major blockage when we hit a certain level of negotiations dealing with federal, provincial or Indian jurisdiction and even to the point of dealing with the problems of program implementation. We have not been able to get past those areas, but I do believe those areas are applicable and can be utilized.

I also believe that the kinds of philosophies and the kinds of items that we want to enact when we go beyond where we are and we start talking about how many more dollars it is going to take to implement the language program, or how many more dollars it is going to cost to implement an Indian history program, or how many books we have to start removing from the shelves and how many new books we have to develop, then we start getting into the cost factors that are related to this, and then suddenly it is easier politically not to deal with the cost factor and to continue on with the status quo.

1500

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Chief Peters, and thank you, Ms. Simonetta, for coming before us today. I know the members have appreciated the opportunity to learn of the concerns of the native people on education, and we thank you for coming before us today.

The next delegation is the Association of Large School Boards in Ontario. I see that Ms. Nelson is here. Would you like to come forward with your delegation? At least come forward with as many of your delegation as we can seat.

Perhaps you could move your chairs as closely together as possible so that you can take advantage of the microphones. I see we not only have large school boards, we also have large numbers. Ms. Nelson, would you like to introduce yourself for the purposes of Hansard and identify the members of your delegation?

ASSOCIATION OF LARGE SCHOOL BOARDS IN ONTARIO

Ms. Nelson: Thank you, Madam Chairman. We are very pleased to be here representing the Association of Large School Boards in Ontario. My name is Fiona Nelson; I am the president.

The person on my left is trustee James Farrell from the Windsor board, a member of the ALSBO executive. Right next to me is Carol Parker from the Carleton board; she is the chairman of our subcommittee preparing the response and the comments for the select committee. On my right is Ted Best, a trustee from the Ottawa board, a member of the subcommittee. Next to him is Marguerite Jackson, a trustee. At the end of the table is John Beatty, superintendent of curriculum from the Carleton board, also a member of the committee.

I am not going to present the comments. I am simply going to give you a wee bit of an outline of what we have been up to. We have had two committees at the association working on responses to the legislative endeavours in this area. One was working on a response to the Radwanski report and the other was working on some comments for you.

We decided that it might be useful for us to combine the efforts of those two groups, since there were a great many parallel tracks, and so what we are going to do today is simply to give you some introductory comments about our views on goals and philosophy, and we hope we will have a chance to talk to you some more about this as your work proceeds.

We think the idea of a select committee on education is extremely valuable and we certainly welcome the chance to give you our ideas. The association of large school boards represents almost half of the public school children in this province in day school and the vast majority of those in night school and continuing education. As a result, we have a very large pool of experience in meeting a wide variety of needs in the communities of the large boards of this province.

We hope to assist you by helping to arrange visits for your committee members to schools, to particular situations that show you how we have both met and dealt with problems that have arisen in quite unique ways one community to another, and we think this would be very useful in demonstrating to you the value of maintaining the local autonomy of boards, in fact, to respond to local needs and to support local communities.

This seems to us to be a very significant point for us to make to you, that this kind of response is made much faster if it is more locally based and that it also allows for a much wider diversity of responses. In another context, we are preparing a response on early childhood and child care, and we have found that among our boards there has been a wide variety of ways of dealing with this.

What one board is passionately seeking, another board has rejected, and still they have come up with responses that have suited their communities well. That is just one small example.

It does seem to me that we have a message for you with which we will deal with some degree of delicacy, but we do think it is important; that is, you should beware of the false message of numbers and statistics. There are a great many more vital ways of finding out the truth than having it reduced to numerical values. Sometimes people get very much seduced by various forms of standardization and testing. They think they are being told something real, and they are not. We would like to help you with that.

What we think we are all dealing with—and it is a very significant problem—is communication. In the presentation by Trustee Parker, she will be going into that more.

We would like to help you to see the scope of Ontario education as represented by our boards. We would hope that you would find ways as individuals or small groups to come to visit the programs that are available so that you can see what is presently offered. Sometimes we find that people have an opinion of schools that is based on secondhand information or hearsay. When they actually get to see what is happening, the fact that Ontario education no longer is solely for blonde, blue-eyed children with two parents and a house with a picket fence, that there is an enormous variety of other children, other problems, other family situations that schools are attempting to deal with, they can see why things have developed along the lines that they have.

I think I will stop there and ask Trustee Parker to continue with our comments specifically for your information.

Mrs. Parker: I am going to give you a short overview of the brief, and I will start with the points we have made in it.

The first point is that the focus of education must be on the individual student. The system can no longer be seen as a production line. Ontario is a multicultural province. More differences exist now than existed in the old days. That also means that standardization is no longer possible, and that is expanded upon in the brief.

Our future requires flexible, creative, trainable individuals with varied skills and knowledge. The most important point of focus should be that every student must learn how to learn.

All areas of this province differ, schools differ in each area and students differ in each school. Therefore, the control has to be in the hands of the local school boards. If boards must be

accountable, they must also be allowed to have control and flexibility within the guidelines set out by the province. The closer the decision-makers are to the student, the more readily they can respond to his or her individual needs. That is the focus of our brief, the individual student and the emphasis on individual quality of education.

The goals of education must be clear and understandable. Teachers should have high expectations of students. Students reach for expectations. Teachers should not accept anything less than the best from each student, but the best which has been stated and shaped by the community that the student is a part of, also never forgetting that the family is the real source of the values and attitudes of the individual student.

We feel the lengthy list of present goals should be reduced and probably replaced by a much shorter, clearer list. We have a suggestion for a list on page 6 of our brief, so I will not repeat that.

The curriculum should concentrate on both skills and process. Technology will constantly be updated, but thinking skills will always be essential. The ultimate goal of education should be to produce a self-directed, independent learner.

The words "process" and "outcome" have become very popular lately, as has the idea of standardized testing to measure outcome. We believe the reason for the perceived need for standardized testing is really a cry from parents for better understanding and better communication. To follow on what Ms. Nelson said, communication is the most important thing as far as parents are concerned. If they do not understand what is going on with their child, they are going to want something they do understand.

1510

Most of today's parents will understand standardized testing because that is what they have been through. They think it gives some sort of figure they can see on paper and understand, and that is what they want. But if they can be told what is going on and have explained to them what the teacher is doing, then that sort of standardized testing is certainly not necessary. They do not want to be told about the process—spiral curriculum versus whatever the opposite of spiral curriculum is. They want to know what their child has achieved and whether or not their child is able to do what he or she should be able to do at whatever age or grade level he or she is at.

Teachers must be taught (a) how to evaluate and (b) how to communicate with parents in the teacher training courses, not from experience gained as they go on. There is an enormous

difference between standardized testing and standardized evaluation. We should not be looking backwards to standardized testing, but forwards to an emphasis on individual quality, and this can be measured by good evaluation with clear criteria.

To sum up our brief, I am going to make six points: focus on the individual student; local school board accountability and initiative and flexibility; a clear, concise short list of goals of education which everyone can understand; to teach every student how to learn; to teach teachers how to evaluate and communicate what they are achieving to parents, and that everyone involved in education should be able to communicate clearly what the system is doing. That completes the summing up of the brief.

Madam Chairman: You mention that the association of large school boards had drafted a list of proposed goals. I did not mention to you that we do have a television audience today which does not have access to the brief, so I wonder if you could run over some of those goals for our audience.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Both of them would like to hear you.

Mrs. Parker: This is the proposed mission statement we have put into the brief as a proposal for replacing the list of 13 goals that there are currently—the first one, on page 6 of the brief, being in fact the Ontario goals of education number 3. They are:

1. The individual should acquire the knowledge and skills needed to comprehend and express ideas through words, numbers and other symbols so that he or she may become a responsible, productive citizen.

2. The individual should learn how to learn, how to adapt to new conditions, how to plan intelligently and how to assume a positive role in society.

3. The individual should be encouraged to be creative, to appreciate artistic endeavour and to develop physical fitness and good health.

We feel that encompasses everything the education system is and should be doing, and can be explained and can be seen to be attained. I think that is the most important thing. If parents can see what the schools are trying to do, then they can see what they can do to help and also what they can ask for to help.

Madam Chairman: I assume that was the overview and you will now go on to individual presentations. Please continue.

Ms. Nelson: I think it might be very helpful, if you have questions of us, that we have a sort of

conversation as we go along, so this will not be formal. I think that in the discussions our trustees have had around your pursuit of goals and philosophy, as well as some of the points raised in the Radwanski report, there does seem to be some comment that would be useful. One is that we felt it was very important that Mr. Radwanski identified the need for relevance of the curriculum to Ontario children not just in an Ontario context, but also in a global context.

To that end, it might be useful to remind you that Competing in the New Global Economy from the Premier's Council has a rather narrow view of the world, east to west and west to east, and that if in fact we were to adopt what Mr. Radwanski had suggested—which seems to us a really significant thing—that is also important for children to get a good view of the world north to south and south to north. To that end, I would recommend to your committee *Our Common Future*, which is the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development which is also an economic report that was headed by Madam Gro Harlem Brundtland, the Prime Minister of Norway. It seems to me that in many ways, these two documents together would give you some very interesting internal debate about the purposes of education.

Education does tend to reflect the values of a particular society and it is not wise, in our opinion, to cherry pick things from other societies if you do not also want to import some of the things from those other societies that do not suit this particular society. I think without being any more specific, it might be very obvious in pursuing that further in your own discussions that it is often interesting to look at outcomes, but really it is also very important to look at the processes that produce those outcomes.

In Ontario, we have a very good Human Rights Code. We have very clearly stated views about multiculturalism and multiracialism and these are things which require very specific processes to be upheld and they may not show up in outcomes that are very narrowly based and standardized in some way. I think what we are doing is issuing a bit of a caveat that it is awfully important when you are designing goals to keep in mind the means by which you get there because good outcomes are not determined by questionable means. I think there is a very strong move afoot to copy some things from other societies that I think are going to have boomers built into them and I think it is really important in looking at curriculum and processes

and ways of evaluating that we keep in mind what are the goals of our society here in Ontario and that we do want to uphold those goals because I think in many ways they are an example to the world.

People are coming to Ontario to look at the way we do things and we should not be too quick to jettison some of the things that have developed over the past few years that in many ways have made Ontario society somewhat more exemplary than other societies. We have a long way to go but I think that there are very important values embodied in our society that are also in our present educational system that we have to be sure we do not lose in the pursuit of something else that looks good from far away.

Before I continue, I made a mistake. Marguerite Jackson is not a trustee from North York; she is the new superintendent of curriculum and I apologize.

Mrs. Marland: Do you also want questions as we go along?

Ms. Nelson: We would be quite happy to have questions if that would help the committee.

Madam Chairman: I am already developing quite an extensive list of those members who wish to ask questions. The normal procedure is that we wait until the end of the presentation simply because we have such inquisitive and curious members that you would never get to give the rest of your presentation if we interrupted for questions.

Ms. Nelson: We have completed our presentation. We did not want to read our brief to you. I am sure you will have time to look at it. I think that questions would be quite appropriate at this stage.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I have a number of questions. I start off with the one which has been plaguing me the most about our education system. It comes from my particular approach to things, which has been dealing with poverty issues for a long time. When I look at the goals of our system and the outcomes of our system, the process of our system at the moment, it strikes me that there is a group within our society which we do not seem to have served as well as we might in the education system and that is the children of poor families, low-income families. By most measurements, they do not seem to have the same educational outcomes as people from the middle class.

I guess when I then look at what our goals are and what we have accomplished to date—many things are positive, but I do not see there is much

point in just dealing with the positive when we have so little time.

What advice do you have about what should be our goals around education and the social upward mobility of kids from lower-income families? Are we doing the best we can? Are there other goals we should state in order to use the education system and other systems to increase the chances of those kids?

There was some commentary at the beginning of your paper, but not a lot, about what changes in focus might be required to change that one glaring thing, to me, of failure within the system.

1520

Ms. Nelson: I think that if you get a chance to go around the province and look at schools in some detail, you will find that a variety of boards have attempted various things to try to equalize some of these things.

I think Mr. Radwanski touched on some of this in his report. Some of his analyses were things that we found very interesting. Some of his solutions, we felt, were not based on something that would be practical.

His idea of enhancing early childhood education as a way of helping some of these children, and maybe having children come into school earlier, and the initiatives that have already been made by the government to more closely co-ordinate the various forms of child care with the schools—I think some of these things have been tried by some boards, including meal programs because it is very clear you cannot teach hungry children.

There is a whole batch of things which a lot of people tend to regard as social programs rather than education programs that in fact are a prerequisite to a child being in a position to learn and benefit from what the school has to offer.

I think a variety of boards have found very interesting ways to do that. I know there is a school, for example, up in the Jane-Finch corridor in North York that has adopted a very comprehensive program precisely for the reasons that you have raised.

I know there are schools in a variety of our member boards that have done this, and in other boards in the province. I would recommend that you have a look at them, not in order to standardize them, but perhaps in order to publicize them, one board to another, so that people are not reinventing the wheel, and perhaps so that you can also see the importance of local initiative and local autonomy in meeting some of these things.

Certainly, the way you would meet these problems in a rural area with a widely dispersed population would be very different from the way you would in the downtown of a large urban centre, or with children whose main problem is not so much long-term poverty but the fact that they have arrived on our shores as refugees with nothing, as well as with the baggage of having been tortured or having to watch torture, or years of deprivation, or whatever.

There are so many forms of impoverishment that there really has to be a variety of ways of dealing with them. I think there are a lot of good examples in the province and some co-ordination of the Education Act, the Child Welfare Act, and the Day Nurseries Act, and a few things like that, might make it much easier for school boards to deal with some of these problems. You may want to deal with that at some point in your discussions.

I would hope you would allow us to come and talk to you on several occasions as you are developing your processes and ideas because I do think we could be of some assistance. I think arriving at these kinds of things co-operatively might have a much greater impact on the school system of this province.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is our intention both to go and see and also to have you back, obviously, as our process develops.

I guess what I am concerned about is in the list of goals of what we hope to achieve in our education system, which seems to be such a self-actualizing, individualistic style approach, we do not state anywhere that we have a goal to make sure that the outcomes for poor kids are the same as the outcomes for middle-income kids, and that the kinds of varied programs that therefore follow from that are put in place. Perhaps one of the problems we have is that we have made that a major goal of education to fit into that spectrum.

I do not want to take too much time because I would rather spend all my time on that particular subject. I will move on to some others.

I find it somewhat ironic these days, the two sides around health and physical fitness. It is listed on your short list of things that should be there for kids. It is listed in the 13 government goals, and yet—We have some complaints about AIDS education being added to the school curriculum, etc. But I am wondering, with this goal, and the reality especially of secondary education at this point in Ontario, if it is any more a realistic goal to even be talking about.

My understanding, and please correct me because I am probably wrong in this, is that you can now get one credit under OSIS for health education, and I presume physical education, but I do not know. I wonder, if that is the case, how on earth we can even state this any longer as a role for our education system and how we can even presume we are going to do proper AIDS education at the secondary level when kids maybe can take their credit easily in grade 9 and get it out of the way, and then for the years when it would be really important to have sex education and other kinds of things in front of them, they may not even be going near that kind of a class. I am wondering again whether or not a goal like that one, which you have stated and which is in the 13, is an actual goal of our system today.

Mrs. Parker: I think the point, as you have said, is that they need take only one credit, but if we start early enough with physical education and health education to encourage them to want to become physically fit and to enjoy being physically fit, then they can go on and take more credits. It is not that they can take only one, it is just that—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Sure, but they require only one, I guess is the point I am making.

Mrs. Parker: They require only one, yes.

Mrs. Sparrow: If I could just add something, I think if you have a chance to get into the schools now, you will find that phys ed classes were in the past very competitive and that is what we taught our students in the schools. We taught them to play basketball, volleyball; very competitive things. Now the teachers are getting into more fitness. As we get that into the elementary schools and get that kind of entrenched with the students, you will find that the extracurricular will now become the competitive sports and the students will be trained in more of a fitness program so that they will want to continue that, but we are just in the beginning stages of that now within the school system. Hopefully, it will be encouraged and progress.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I guess what I am wanting to know, though, given that is the case and I accept that, is since OSIS, have we actually seen a dropoff in the number of kids taking health programs? If that is the case, given what we know about sexual activity among teenagers and how that increases as they go through the teen years and the higher levels of school, and now with what we know about AIDS, can we really talk about this goal being a prime goal still? Have

we lost somehow a focus between what we are doing in curriculum and what our stated goal is?

Ms. Nelson: I think we can still have it as a goal, but if we are going to meet that goal, perhaps one of the things you people might want to do is do something about OSIS. That is not within our purview, but I think there might be some people who would be gratified to see some alteration. It is unfortunate, because, as Mr. Green said yesterday, we keep putting the plant in the ground and pulling it up to see how the roots are doing all the time and it really does not allow us to get much under way, but by now, perhaps some of the worst warts on OSIS are starting to show and it might be a good time to do something about it.

The other thing is that things such as AIDS education, attitudes towards sexuality, healthy living and that sort of thing do not necessarily have to be taught as lessons in physical and health education. Those are in many ways attitudes that can be taught in everything from English literature to science.

I get a little antsy when people talk about a crowded curriculum, because it does seem to me that if teachers want to inculcate certain attitudes in children, they have dozens of covers for it. It does not have to be under phys ed and health, but I do think your point is well taken by looking at OSIS itself and the experience we have had with it.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Great. That is what I wanted to hear.

Interjection.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Two short ones, if I can; do we have time or not?

Madam Chairman: We have Mrs. Marland, Mrs. O'Neill and Mr. Cooke on the list. If they could be very short, or perhaps you would be willing to wait until after Mr. Cooke spoke.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Let me roll them together and they can either respond or just file it away for a response afterwards. It does not really matter.

Madam Chairman: Fine.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Just two things I note. We have an interesting mix ideologically in this province. I take very much to heart what you are saying about not going borrowing from too far afield, that we can learn a lot from our own society here.

I am concerned in what I see, as a socialist, of this move towards the entrepreneurial ethic that seems to be out there, which I even notice mentioned in your group of goals, without

having in your list of goals the comparison or the opposite side of this, which is towards co-operative learning, collective actions, that sort of thing and what is in goal 13, which is the sense of personal responsibility for the community.

1530

For instance, when you list in your summary what you want to leave with us, you are promoting initiative, creativity and entrepreneurial skills. There is an emphasis on the other side of what I hope is a major portion of our society's ethic, which is social responsibility. I just wanted to throw that out. When we are looking for a mix here, that balance is something which I think we need to look towards.

The other thing I wanted to ask, and maybe Mr. Cooke was going to go after this, is the whole accountability question within education, the role of the family, the role of the community. Again, I did not see much of an emphasis on in this. Perhaps I misread the paper, but I would be interested in comments around the philosophy of education in terms of the role of the family and the role of the community as they affect boards, but also as they affect individual schools.

Ms. Nelson: I think that we did mention quite strongly that we wanted to have an equal emphasis on process, as well as on outcomes. The process, to me, is where the co-operation and the idea of working together as groups and working with society are so important.

I also draw to your attention, on page 6 of our paper, that one of the things the individual should acquire is a variety of skills so that he or she may become a responsible, productive citizen. I think the "responsible" part does refer, and is intended to refer, to the kinds of things that I think Mr. Johnston is talking about in social interaction.

In other words, I do not think that we intended, when we referred to "entrepreneurial," that it was to be seeing how many people you can skin. It is the idea of initiative and trying to make a go of things and use individual creativity. I doubt if anywhere, in any of our discussions, the idea was to see how many necks you could step on to get ahead. Certainly, when we talk about process, we are in fact talking about the ways in which children can be assisted to work together and develop a sense of themselves as part of a group and as part of a society in a responsible way.

The other part of the question has slipped my mind.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Family.

Ms. Nelson: Oh, support for the family. When we talked about the problem not necessarily

being one that would be solved by standardized test scores, but by better communication of what it is we want to do and how well we are doing to get there, I think that in fact we spent a fair amount of time talking about the fact that teachers need to be better trained in evaluating criteria and communicating the results of the evaluation of what they have done. I think that has a lot to do with teacher training.

It seems to me that a very big part of our problem as school boards and part of the problem of schools themselves, as well as of the Ministry of Education, is that we have not been very good at communicating what is going on at the moment, how we seek to improve it and what our criteria are in understandable terms.

It was so easy to fall into jargon and, as was mentioned earlier, this business about the spiral curriculum and whatever is the opposite to it. Teachers and educators have problems with some of these terms, never mind the poor, ordinary parent or child. I think we have an enormous communication problem here that we need to work on co-operatively to overcome. In fact, some of the worst fears and concerns that are expressed by the public might better be dealt with by co-operatively coming up with some way of communicating our goals and how we evaluate the achievement of them to parents in the community.

That also works in with the whole business of local autonomy, meaning school autonomy as well as school board autonomy, because that is the best way, in our opinion, to support families in a co-operative venture with the schools in achieving the goals that we have.

It is a long process. It cannot be achieved overnight, and it cannot be measured, I do not think, by any numerical factors. I think the way it would be measured is in a significant decrease in the kinds of complaints that we are hearing.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. I think Mrs. Parker had a comment.

Mrs. Parker: Yes, I did comment in the overview that the family is the real source of values and attitudes of the child. The child is with the family for 18 hours out of 24. The child is only in school for six hours. I think the education system should not lose sight of that. The school and the school board should be conscious of what is being shaped by each community for that child and working towards that with the community.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: There is the power relationship that I want to get at, but I will leave that for some other debate.

Madam Chairman: We have five additional members who have indicated they would like to ask questions—Mrs. Marland, Mrs. O'Neill, Mr. Cooke, Mr. Jackson and Mr. McClelland—and we are fast running out of time. If members could try to keep their questions brief so that we could have longer answers and shorter questions, that would be marvellous.

Mrs. Marland: I will keep mine as brief as Mr. Johnston's.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: There's no need.

Mrs. Marland: It is important, I think, when we are looking at the mandate of this committee, to address the issue of what the goals of society are as they pertain to education. When Mrs. Parker said the family is the real source of values and attitudes because the school only has that child 8 or 6 hours or whatever the figure was she used, if you take out the other 10 or 12 hours that a child may sleep, you get down to a very small amount of time. In fact, the amount of time the child has with the family is less of his waking hours perhaps than is the school day.

As we look at the goal of society and as we become such a materialistic society and our standard of living is elevated to the extent that it is, where we all have to work because we all have two cars, the resort property, the vacations and everything else—be that as it may, if that is the direction of society and we are willing to sit back and accept that we become a materialistic society to the degree that the focus of the family starts to diminish, we recognize the socioeconomic strain that places on couples today, requiring the mother to work and meaning that the responsibility for the children becomes more and more the responsibility of some institution.

When I was a trustee for four years in the 1970s, we were just starting into the era of wondering whether, in the public system, we should have junior kindergarten. At that time, I think Ontario was the only province that institutionalized its children two years more than any other province, with kindergarten and grade 13. In the decade since then, what we have extended is the institutionalization of children. We are doing it more and more. We are now adding the child care facility to the physical plant of the educational facility.

Do you see the responsibility of education, possibly starting even at the age of two and a half, becoming more the total responsibility that affects the life of those children in the future? Is that the goal of our society? Should that be the goal of our society, that we, as mothers, have children and immediately hand them over to

some other facility and some other person to mould their future? There was a big article about this in one of the Toronto papers yesterday.

Ms. Nelson: Whether we like it or not, clearly, somebody has to be responsible for society's children. If there is a gap in the family, then someone else had better step in, because the children need to be cared for by someone. I do not think these services should be mandatory, but I certainly think they should be available so that the kinds of deficits that were mentioned in an earlier question can be dealt with in some reasonable way, in time to make a difference. That is always going to be the balancing act, I think, having things available so that children do not lose out but not intervening where a family is coping quite well, thank you very much.

The other comment that you made about the degree to which we are becoming materialistic is a worry. It shows up as a worry in environmental issues, economic issues, social issues, all kinds of things. The kind of advertising to which children are subjected on television which makes them so acquisitive also leads to some antisocial behaviours that have us concerned. These things do fit together.

While obviously children do gain their primary values from their parents, either positive values or negative ones, clearly teachers and the school system have a big responsibility to attempt to convey the general values of society to children in the school system, and in our society I think those values do include the fact that we are responsible one for the other and that somehow we have to step in and do things.

1540

When I mentioned earlier the fact that in some schools this includes things like breakfast programs and clothing and whatever, then I think it has to. It is not that we encourage it, but I do not think that because a school has a breakfast program, mothers are all going to start sleeping in. I have never been persuaded of that.

We need to have safety nets all over the place, and that is going to be part of the situation. In the five days that children are in school, certainly the school may have them the majority of the time, but there are another 100 odd days when there are holidays and weekends when the schools cannot, and we have to be cognizant of that fact and have ways of, if you like, making up some of the differences.

It is going to be a balancing act. I do not know how else we are going to do it, because I do think the children of our society are all our children in

a final sense and we have to have their welfare in mind.

Mrs. Sparrow: If I could add also, I think one of the situations that a number of the ALSBO boards are running into is the restrictions that are put on us by the Education Act in regard to the school day. Some of our boards have indeed been very innovative and very creative, although there is a lot of work that has to be done in order to institute it.

But through continuing and adult education and some of the courses that we now have in place and hopefully are working on piloting, if we can attain to more easily accessing the delivery times, we can start to focus on the adolescents and the adults and educate them so that some of the problems we are having with the young children now can be addressed through the training of the adolescents and adults we have in society now.

Mrs. Marland: The inner-city programs that you refer to, the clothing and breakfast programs, have been wonderful, as have the extended-day ones for those school communities that absolutely need them in order to survive. But I am talking about just the overall direction where everybody is being looked after, whether the basic need is there or not.

I am not a regular member of this committee but to have ALSBO in front of us it is such a temptation—and I do not know whether it is appropriate to ask you—but when you are looking at the future direction of education, I am sure ALSBO also has to look at the future direction of its ability to provide the standard education and the opportunities, indeed, in education that you have outlined this afternoon.

I wondered in that arena whether you would dare to venture a comment on the Macdonald commission pooling of assessment. Mrs. Parker just mouthed the words as they came out at the end.

Ms. Nelson: I think that when we speak of local autonomy, clearly we talk about the means to carry out some of these things as well as the power to carry them out. As I understand it, there are going to be some opportunities for us to be very specific on this matter later on in the summer and early fall, and it is certainly our intention to do that.

As you probably are aware, the three public school trustee associations are very soon going to enter into a form of marriage which may give us a chance to speak with one voice on this matter, which is of overwhelming concern to us, naturally.

I would not want to go into a major digression at this point on that, but you can be sure that our word "autonomy" has a very large meaning and it involves funding.

Mrs. O'Neill: Mine will be very brief remarks; no questions. I want to offer two comments.

I am very happy to see such a large representation from eastern Ontario on this panel this afternoon, having always felt somehow that we did not get down to Toronto as much as some of the other parts of the province, so that gives me pride.

I feel that your brief is very well presented and I guess, unlike Mr. Johnston, I see the word "family" quite often, much more than I would have expected to see the word "family." I see also the word "community." I know your chairman quite well, and the first time I met her she was speaking about communication with her community and strategies for doing that. I think it is in her leadership, and I am sure the committee's intent is well expressed here.

One of the biggest challenges to the public school system, whether it be the separate or public, is to get your message to your constituents and to allay fears. I always feel it is important for us, as legislators, to try to deal with those things as they are presented to us as well. I congratulate you on the quality of the brief. I feel it has a very high level of idealism in it, and that is where I think people in your position should speak from.

Ms. Nelson: I hope that co-operatively we will be able to maintain that. I think we have a big message to get out.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I just want to ask a question about the "Accountability and Governance" section of your brief. I say this as a former trustee and somebody who sees a lot of community concern about education at times when there are teachers' strikes, when mill rates are being set or when trustees are raising their annual salaries. That is when there seems to be publicity and concern by large groups of people.

I think that when we write our reports we should address the whole issue of real accountability and real participation among students, parents—perhaps not all parents—and taxpayers, but primarily parents, so that there is more control of the school system at the real local level, the neighbourhood or community level. I think it was yesterday that Mr. Keyes was asking questions and referring to the old reports on community schools, which we did a lot of talking about in Ontario. But there was not a lot of

implementation, I believe, along the real lines that they have done in Flint, Michigan.

The city of Toronto has done more things than have been done elsewhere in Ontario to get parental involvement in the actual policy and governance at a community level. What are your feelings, what recommendations would you make and do you think that is important if we are going to really make the system accountable and sensitive to neighbourhood and community needs?

Ms. Nelson: I think it is very important for us to involve people as much as we can, to give them as much decision-making power as we can. We should be aware, however, that it only works if there are some people willing to do an enormous amount of work. Where you have community schools or alternative schools, you put an enormous burden on those parents in the matter of constant involvement and decision-making, and parents who are willing to do that should be given the opportunity to do it.

I think a very large number of parents, for a variety of reasons, among them economic, simply do not have the time and the strength to be as involved as they would like to be, and that increases our duty to make sure we are communicating with them to the extent we possibly can, simply because they have not got the time to get in there and find out the things they would like to know.

In many ways, the fact that there are so many single-parent families and families where both parents are out in the workforce increases our responsibility to communicate accurately and effectively with parents. The fact that we have such vast numbers of parents for whom English is not a first language makes it a much more difficult task. The fact that we have parents from such a wide variety of cultures and countries makes it important as well for us to take into account various cultural differences that make understanding of the message much more difficult.

That is not to say the job is impossible; it is just to say that it is an immensely difficult task. There are school boards in this province that routinely put out all their materials in a variety of languages in an attempt to do that and have staff to assist communities in organizing. But that is an additional expenditure for school boards. It makes the process longer, more tedious, more messy; it means you have more deputations, all that kind of stuff that has to be not only tolerated but in fact encouraged.

That is tough, because you are also talking there about having trustees who have the time to devote to the task. In many ways, as we outline what the job is, we are saying that it has become incumbent on school boards to do vastly more than was done in the past and to do it much better, and that is a tall order. I think what it needs, to some extent, is much closer co-operation between the ministry and school boards in doing this, because a lot of it has to be joint.

1550

It also means that once again we get back to the business of local autonomy, that boards have to be free to do this kind of responding as they see fit and when it comes up.

Since you did mention the matter of trustees' honoraria, salaries, allowances, whatever they are called—and I imagine I know what you are referring to—I should explain that if trustees were treated with the respect that they should be, the law would allow them to deal with their honoraria in exactly the same way as federal, provincial and municipal politicians do, instead of constantly having to catch up.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: It does not help, believe me.

Ms. Nelson: I simply thought, since there was a wee bit of an implied crack there, I would get one back.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: The first item I had to deal with as a trustee is when we raised our honorarium to \$7,000, but that was 12 years ago.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: He has been consistent throughout his career.

Ms. Nelson: I just thought I would put a little bleep of co-operation once again on that one. It might make the burden a little easier to bear.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: But the point I was making was that the only time some people seem to become aware of who a trustee is is when his name is in the paper for either closing a school or raising taxes or raising the honorarium. There does not seem to be the involvement of the community, and parents in particular, on a daily or weekly basis.

Obviously, there is going to have to be a community development officer, people working in the community to develop the community relations to get the parents in to see that there is something more than just the schools being used for kids as well, so that ongoing education takes place within the schools.

Ms. Nelson: I think it is probably analogous to the fact that we rarely call Eaton's to tell the people there what a nice store it is. We usually

call to complain about a particular product. I suspect that is just the way things work. It would be nice if it worked the other way. But if there is constant communication between the school communities and the school boards and education authorities, probably you just do not hear very much any other time.

To go back to the trustee salary thing that you are referring to, the furore has been largely in the media, not from constituents.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I think there are some barriers that have to be broken too. Who controls the school? Are trustees and are administrators willing to give up any of that control in return for sharing of power with parents and with communities? I do not think it is just communication.

Ms. Nelson: No, obviously there is ownership, and it is a very important thing for a community to feel ownership of a school at times other than its being closed or given away or whatever. That is a very long developmental process, and I think sensitive principals and teachers and trustees already do that in a lot of places in a lot of ways.

It is not something that necessarily gets legislated. It is often an attitude that encourages that kind of ebb and flow of information, discussion, concern, whatever. I think it is very much to be encouraged and would fit in with the earlier comments about—you know, if the teacher training involved some of that discussion, it might be very interesting and very helpful.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. One last question: Mr. McClelland. I think we will have time for a fairly quick question.

Mr. McClelland: Thank you for the opportunity, Madam Chairman. I thought our time was gone and I indicated I was willing to pass. I just wanted to invite a very quick response in terms of Mrs. Parker's and Ms. Nelson's comments with respect to standardization, something we will probably visit again. Like my colleague Margaret Marland, I am not a regular member of this committee. Perhaps I will have the opportunity to come back when you are here again.

I want to clarify. We talked about communication. Are you suggesting that there is absolutely no role or no value from your perspective in having some type of standardized measurement throughout the system? I did not think I heard you say that. I think you are talking more in terms of emphasis with respect to self-direction, and you use the term, I believe, "self-directed, independent learner."

I want to focus. I was a little bit concerned and I did not want to pick up the message incorrectly

that you are throwing out the baby with the bath water with respect to the role and the place for some sort of standardized measurement throughout the system. I just invite a relatively brief comment on that from whomever.

Mrs. Parker: Yes, I hope we will be able to come back to that in September, I believe. No, I think the comment that I made was that there was a difference between standardized testing and standardized evaluation and that it is not necessary to use standardized testing in order to get a measurement. But again, rather than expand on that now, I think we can come back to that later.

Mr. McClelland: I think it is fairly significant.

Mrs. Parker: It is significant, yes.

Mr. McClelland: It is an area that I think requires further discussion.

Mrs. Parker: It is very important.

Mr. McClelland: That is why I just wanted to raise it, because there are some significant concerns there.

Mrs. Parker: I believe Trustee Best wants to comment on the same thing.

Mr. Best: I think there should be more emphasis on diagnostic testing and it should be within the individual school rather than on a systems basis. I have seen that sometimes, oftentimes, standardized testing becomes an end in itself. I think the emphasis should be on local autonomy, for the local school to do its own standardized testing and not overly abuse it, as it is in some systems today.

Mrs. Parker: Again, I would like to make that point, the difference between standardized testing and standardized evaluation. I think that has to be gone into.

Madam Chairman: Ms. Nelson, I would like to thank you and the other members of the Association of Large School Boards in Ontario for coming before us and presenting us with a very stimulating dialogue. We appreciate the time and effort you have taken with us.

Ms. Nelson: Thank you, and I hope you will accept our invitation, especially in little groups where you can actually sit and observe some things that are going on in the schools, because I think we have a lot to show you.

Madam Chairman: I would certainly, personally, like to take you up on that invitation and I suspect a number of the other committee members will as well.

Ms. Nelson: Good. Thank you very much.

Madam Chairman: We will now hear the delegation from the Association for Early Childhood Education, Ontario. Would you please come forward?

Interjections.

Madam Chairman: Order, please. Would the delegations at the back of the room please try to tone it down?

Now that peace has been restored, Ms. Winter, would you like to introduce your colleague?

ASSOCIATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, ONTARIO

Ms. Winter: My colleague with me today is Anne Ellison. She is the chairperson of the professional development committee for the Association for Early Childhood Education. She is also a faculty member at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute's early childhood education department. I am the brand new president for the Association for Early Childhood Education, Ontario. I am also the executive director of the Scarborough Boys and Girls Club.

Madam Chairman: Please proceed. You have a half hour. Even though you are starting late, we will allow you extra time at the other end. We suggest you leave approximately half your time for questions and the other half for your presentation. You may wish to take longer with your presentation. That is as you wish.

Ms. Winter: That is fine. We have a very brief presentation. I apologize to the committee members for not having brought them the materials yesterday. We will briefly speak to our materials and have a few comments. We will reserve most of the time for questions.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. Proceed as you will.

Ms. Winter: I would like to tell you a little bit about our organization, first of all. We are an organization of over 2,000 members, primarily early childhood educators who work in day care programs and other early childhood programs around the province. We are, I guess, one of the only professional organizations for a group such as that. Our group is 35 years old and we have always primarily been concerned with quality education of young children. I guess that brings me to the reason we are here today.

When you are considering the philosophy of education, we are very concerned about where young children fit into the philosophy of education, so we come today to present to you two documents. Anne Ellison will speak to a

short presentation she has and then I will make a few comments as well about our High Quality Child Care Statement, which is this document. I will ask Anne Ellison to make a few comments.

1600

Ms. Ellison: Rather than boring you all, because you all have eyes and can read the document in front of you, the plain document, I think it might be useful if I just walked you through and highlighted some of the key components of each of the paragraphs.

I think that prior to doing that, it is also important to define what we mean by early childhood education here in Ontario. Those are the children deemed to be within this early sphere, between the ages of birth and five years of age. There are children across the province of Ontario in programs for that age range.

Given that age range, these are some of our beliefs. Children grow and change by having direct experience with the world, through experiences with people, experiences with interpersonal situations and experiences with objects. Children construct their knowledge not when they are five years old and begin to attend kindergarten; they begin to construct their knowledge of the world from the moment they are born. The first person they have their experience with is usually their mother, their primary care giver. That is one of the basic tenets of the philosophy of early childhood education; that is, that learning begins from birth onwards.

Inherent in this philosophical belief is that every child in Ontario has the right to feel comfortable and secure. They need to know what is happening to them on a moment-by-moment basis. I am sure all of you in this room are parents and have at some point or another dealt with your child and your child had cause to wonder why you were doing something differently. You did not put on his T-shirt the way it was yesterday, or the red socks that were in the drawer yesterday are not there today and there is something the matter with that. Children need consistency of routines in order to feel secure.

They also need to be valued as unique individuals and need stimulation and challenge.

The reason these three philosophical points are inherent in our beliefs is that in order to produce adults who feel good about themselves as capable and competent problem-solvers and decision-makers, they must feel masters of their own house as children. One of the tacit beliefs in early childhood education is that we must give children these skills.

The components for early childhood education, as you see them in front of you, are five.

Support for parents: We believe very strongly that in early childhood programs we are not a substitute for parents but a supplement. We are there to be additional resources to support their family lifestyle.

A safe and healthy environment: In early childhood programs in Ontario, those conditions are mandated through local municipalities and through the Ministry of Community and Social Services. They must be stringently adhered to, because health and safety for young children must be within adult control. There is no choice for a child.

A comfortable environment: The physical environment a young child is within each day must be consistent, warm and soft. That refers to the textures children experience. We would not want children to be in the lobby of a major hotel that had no soft, inviting places in which to cuddle up and feel secure.

The next philosophical belief flows from that. It is that young children require emotional nourishment from the varying forms of cozy laps, hugs, smiles or soothing touches. We, as adults, need to give that to young children because mature adults evolve from children who feel positive and secure about themselves.

In conclusion, the total child is the child who is being considered within the philosophy of early childhood education; that is, all four domains of development—cognitive, social, emotional and physical—must be planned for in order to assist the child's growth and development.

There is an overwhelming amount of research to point out that the first few years of a child's life are critical years and that the programs we put in place for young children have long-term social and economic benefits for society. Most of this research is being carried out in the United States at the moment, but Canada is beginning to see the value of this kind of research into early childhood. I want to point out that it is the total society that benefits from the total education of the young child.

The quality care statement, which is the second document and which Ms. Winter will refer to, really addresses the specific components of the philosophy.

Ms. Winter: I would like to carry on with a few additional comments to Ms. Ellison's. I would like to tell you a little bit about this document. A committee of the association worked on this for two years and received broad input from the field at large to develop a

consensus on what early childhood educators felt quality care entailed.

Related to quality care, quite often early educators will tell you that good care educates. That is how we kind of connect this with your philosophy of education. There are several points extracted from this document that talk about the specifics of early education that we feel should be considered in the philosophy of education you are undertaking to review.

First is a set of skills for the individual. Education as a philosophy should really concern itself with the individual's ability to learn, and there are three aspects we would like you to consider. One is the importance of self-esteem in the individual's learning. A young person, a child, needs to feel capable, competent and able, and needs to have the highest regard and confidence in himself to be able to take on a task of learning.

You have heard so many times, in reference to the educational system, people talk about how they never thought they could make it to university because of all these preconceptions about their ability. Ability and expectation start in a young child. We are concerned about giving children the confidence and self-esteem to get on with it and to learn. That is key to your philosophy of education.

Social integration is another aspect of the philosophy. It does not help if you have all the confidence in the world but you are unable to relate to different multicultural groups, to the disadvantaged; or are unable to communicate in committees such as this one or in the workplace or at school. Your learning is enhanced considerably when you have the communication skills and the social skills to be able to relate to the world at large. We feel that social integration is also a key skill that should be part of the philosophy and support to the individual. A child should be able to get up in the morning and feel that the world is his or hers and that he or she can take it on and learn whatever he or she wants to learn.

Self-determination: That should also be a key part of the philosophy, the will to be able to say: "I can learn whatever I want to learn because the educational system will teach me how to learn. It does not matter what. It does not matter if it is chemistry. It does not matter if it is law or medicine. Somebody is going to teach me, give me the problem-solving skills, the creativity so that I can pursue whatever form of education I want." That is not always the case, unfortunately, at the moment. So many times we stream

children's thinking of what their capabilities are and what they are able to take on.

I will give an example of that. The clientele I serve at a boys and girls club are primarily from a socially disadvantaged area. They are in a very low-income group. They live in socially assisted housing. I think those kids are doomed by the age of three as to where they are going to wind up in this educational system. I look at the reports at the schools these children attend. They never make it to the collegiate schools. They might make it in a vocational school and a collegiate school. The drop-out rate by grade 10 is astounding. The kids I serve in the boys and girls club by age 10 are one grade level behind and you can correlate that back to address. Somebody has given them the message that they are not going to make it very far and that is part of the philosophy of education that I think needs to be addressed.

1610

Lastly, I think there are two or three approaches that the philosophy should take into account.

It should be holistic and integrated. Education is no longer just serving the educational needs of the individual. Education is dependent on other things that are happening in the world, and many other aspects of the world affect how a child is going to learn. For example, the community impacts greatly on a child. If you have to take three buses to get to school, that is going to affect how you learn. If the school you go to is an inner-city school without inner-city resources, or if it is highly multicultural and there are no resources to translate the materials into different cultures so your parents understand what is going on, that is going to impact on how well you do at school.

The family is an integral part. We are seeing that in the early childhood field with what happens in the day care programs. You can teach a child whatever you want between the hours of nine in the morning and five in the afternoon, but if a parent does not agree with it, there is all that rest of the time. You and the parent have to co-operate with each other in deciding how the child is going to learn and what he is going to learn. It is really important because real learning takes place in the family.

The influential others I have alluded to, such as day care centres, are all part of the integrated, holistic approach that education needs to take into consideration. How many children are now attending day care programs and nursery programs? Their ability to learn starts before they hit the early childhood education system. Even if you have junior and senior kindergarten, some of

these children have already begun the learning process well before that.

Sometimes there is a gap between leaving a day care program and arriving at the educational system. The day care, the parent and the school all know something about the child, but how often do they all communicate about the child and make sure they are not backpedalling?

I have seen many children who have learned to read and to do all kinds of cognitive tasks and have acquired many social skills by the time they leave the day care program. By the time they reach the school system, because two groups have not communicated, there is one system set up here where someone says: "Thank you very much, but we expect a five-year-old to be at this level down here. You are up here a little bit. Well, we will just have you start down here a little bit." That does not help.

There needs to be much more co-operation between all the groups that have something to do with the child to strike a program of learning for the child that is based on that child's individual needs.

I guess the last part of being holistic is that no two people are the same. Each of us learns in a different way. We all have different learning styles. What is good for you is not good for me. We might still learn to be doctors, but we might have two different routes to get there. I think the educational system would have to take a look at how it individualizes the approach to education.

Education, to be holistic and integrated, obviously needs to take an approach that is flexible and is able to adapt to different children, to different groups of children and to different educational needs. It needs to be child-directed versus content-directed. In other words, let us not start with how many things you need to learn about chemistry before you get a chemistry credit, but with what you need to learn about chemistry and where each child is when he starts the program, what skills he has and what skills he does not have. Let us work on it from that starting point.

In conclusion, the last part of the philosophy I would like you to take into account is that although maybe the educational institutions are the primary movers for providing people with education, they are not in isolation. Education has to be a partnership, I believe, between a number of other significant factors in society. They are probably embodied in ministries such as Health, Community and Social Services and other ministries. This is not a segregated life any more. We are all affected by other factors in the

environment and I think education needs to reflect that.

Those are our remarks and we both welcome questions.

Madam Chairman: Thank you for your very thorough presentation.

Mr. Jackson: Thank you for a very interesting brief. I am very anxious to ensure that the work of this committee deals rather extensively with the area of early childhood education and early identification.

The area I want to pinpoint that you referred to is the entry point for kindergarten in Ontario. What we have are growing numbers, and a growing gulf in terms of numbers, of the abilities of students—for children, actually—to be prepared for schooling; the experience they have in kindergarten is one year with a certain pupil-teacher ratio and it jumps to another PTR in grade 1 and so on.

Has your association given any thought to changes in the entry date cutoff in Ontario? I have a lot of very strong opinions about that with respect to having been a trustee and having served in that capacity when the ministry put everybody on that magic December 31 date. The Halton board had it at the end of February. Could you comment on that? Then maybe I will propose some concepts for you to react to.

Ms. Winter: Are you asking if the entry level for a child into kindergarten should still be December 31?

Mr. Jackson: I did not see anything in your brief with respect to entry date. To me, clearly, there is evidence that we should be examining the individual child's ability to enter the system, since the system is receptive to a child within a certain range.

Ms. Winter: No, not as a point of discussion. Our association has not been looking at that sort of question at the moment.

Mr. Jackson: It seems to me there is a controversy in the province that we would just add another lower year, and I do not want to get into whether that is good or bad, but it does not resolve the point of the differentiation in terms of preparedness. We have done some early-identification models in Halton. We were one of the first boards in Ontario to do that, actually back in the 1960s. We were in fact going out into the community and interviewing children before they even came to school.

Have you ever had any discussions about a prescreening and a form of testing for that earlier entrance? We know that girls are better prepared

than boys; there is certain statistical information on that.

I am doubly concerned now, because I have a daughter who is starting to read too much and she is only 27 months old. I am worried about this. Her birthday falls badly, so she is going to be held an extra year. These are all matters that are starting to concern me. I do not just give her more books, either. She wants more challenging books.

Ms. Ellison: She will be a senior citizen in senior kindergarten.

Mr. Jackson: The reason I raised it is that I did not see it in your report. You have been very clear in what you have covered; I want to know what your thoughts are in that area.

Ms. Winter: OK. It is indirect, but again what I come back to in our report is that learning is an individual matter and good education will take stock of where an individual child is in his or her learning process. What are they able to do? Where is their starting point? Maybe the cutoff date would be December 31, but having entered a kindergarten program, I would expect that there would be a responsive environment that would meet the wide range of needs of all the individual children in that program.

Yes, there is always the child whose birth date is January 1, and maybe there is the slower child, because he is later in the year; and then there is the other child who is closer to the other end or whatever. Developmentally they are ahead; they are chronologically ahead.

Also, there are other factors. Age is not the only thing impacting on the kindergarten classroom. There is also the cultural groups that the children come from. If they are new Canadians maybe there is a language problem. There are social factors impacting on that as well.

Mr. Jackson: But the language and social factors transcend virtually every grade level. That has been an ongoing problem. What I am trying to focus on is what one deputant referred to as the gulf between the child who cannot even put a sentence together and a child who is reading novels when he enters kindergarten. That phenomenon is increasing in this province. There is every evidence to show that. It is partially because of the refinement of television as a mass medium in terms of an educational tool, and also because of certain access to day care and an attitude among the baby-boomers and others who are raising their children with a different perspective and a different priority.

To extend your response to me, I know when the Association for Bright Children come here, for example, they are going to be very specific to this committee about the question I raise and the dilemma of how we help those children to be sufficiently challenged and to progress them. There is even further evidence that says you have got to be very careful catapulting a child from kindergarten into grade 2 for a variety of other reasons as well, and that the entry point becomes far more significant. Regarding Ontario looking at the pressures of going into junior kindergarten on a mass basis, as soon as we do that there is going to be pressure to start a year earlier than that; and Radwanski even addresses it, but for different reasons.

I am trying to get at the point of differentials that exist so that ability grouping at a very critical stage, and probably the most significant stage, the primary junior division in education. I have always felt that we have some problems sufficiently challenging some children. They get only half-day experience, for openers, and for only one year, and then they jump to a full day with a radically different PTR in most instances. I know you cannot comment beyond that, unless you would like to comment more, but it is an area that I wish to pursue during the course of the next year of inquiry. I think it is a significant area that we should look at for those children who, for whatever reason, are better prepared for entry.

Ms. Winter: When you refer to testing and early identification, I guess, in my mind, those are all tools for knowing the developmental level of the child. However, if that is being used to delay a child's entry into the educational system, I really do not see the point in that; but if it is used for better defining what their educational needs are, to get them in the right classroom, in the right grouping with the right curriculum style, maybe the right learning style, that is a different question, and that, I think, is most appropriate; but beyond that I really cannot comment.

Mr. Jackson: I will leave it at that, but the point I am trying to stress is that there is this fence, there is this barrier, and it is based on the age of the child, purely and simply. Given the wide body of knowledge on the gender differential in terms of early entry, on that basis alone we should not have such a fixed signpost or benchmark for children's entry. I just sense the problem is going to get worse and not better. I had hoped that more groups would have looked at that.

Leaving that question, I again wish to commend you for your guidance on all the other

areas, the kind of environment that we are seeking for early child education, and we hope it will make its way into our philosophy and goals in a clearer statement.

Ms. Ellison: If I could just add my remarks as to why our association has not addressed your issue as head on as you would like it, when young children are admitted to early childhood programs—and early childhood programs at this point, by definition, could be a nursery school program, a day care centre, however else you want to use other wordings, other labels—they are not admitted on the basis of age. They are admitted on the basis of, primarily, parental need for that service.

Mr. Jackson: And ability to pay, as well.

Ms. Ellison: Yes. So age is never a factor.

Mr. Jackson: It is true to that extent, but that gets to the point that Mr. Johnston keeps stressing in terms of the opportunities that are provided. The people who have money therefore have access to those programs. There was a document that used to refer to it as the head start, and it enunciated in very clear terms all those items which could be done to assist the children to better prepare themselves. Even Radwanski deals with it in his own way. Yet, we get a tremendous differential in children entering at kindergarten, and I think it is far too great an expectation on the part of a kindergarten teacher to keep order in a classroom, relative order, and meet the needs in that classroom of kids who may be reading at a grade 3 level and children who cannot even identify their alphabet. That has some relevance to the points that Mr. Johnston has also raised.

Madam Chairman: Speaking of Mr. Johnston, he is next on the list, and I know he has a particular interest in this field, since he has recently had a new addition to the family.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Who tried her best to interrupt the committee just now.

Mr. Jackson: Politics has had its effect on you.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Anything is possible these days.

I have just one question, although it opens up a whole series of areas. It follows a little bit along the lines of what Mr. Jackson was asking.

It seems to me that we have an interesting mix of educational philosophies, depending on whether you come from early childhood right through to what we do at our post-secondary levels; but interestingly enough, there are some structural separations which are more than just

entry dates and which have different ministries responsible, etc.

What I notice, coming to this field late but with more knowledge in your area than I do in the standard educational area, we move from the sort of "good care educates" notion and the nurturing concepts of early childhood education into the kindergarten and grade 1 and grade 2 levels, where we move into what is a child-centred learning experience relative to the rest of what happens in the education system and where the jargon of child-centred learning actually does take place. Then we move into increasingly less co-operative learning and more and more competitive learning and the streaming you talk about, the intensification and stratification of education through the secondary levels especially. Then it is, of course, established absolutely in terms of who gets to go to a college or to a university.

My question—and you do not address it, and neither did the school boards, actually, when they came to us—is this: What is the structural role now for early childhood education? Should it remain as a service available to the community as a social service? Should it be seen as something that can be a social equalizer, taking away the head-start notions that people with money have who can buy certain kinds of stimulative education and all the possibilities for their kids prior to going into the school system? If it is going to be that, what can be learned by the rest of the education system from the educational philosophy which is in early childhood education and which is extracted out of the rest of the system by the time they finish the elementary panel?

I want to know whether there is some possibility that some of the holistic attitudes and values which are involved in early childhood education can in fact permeate the rest of our education system. The concepts, for instance, of popular education developed in the Third World, a great deal of which in fact may be the continuum in terms of the philosophy of education that comes from early childhood education, and that then would find itself at least through the secondary levels of our education system.

I would like to get your responses to that in terms of where you fit within that structure, hopefully some day a structural continuum, instead of the segments we have at the moment.

Ms. Winter: This topic comes up from time to time, because there is this real stress about where the school boards actually take over the day care centres and would that be a good thing or not.

If you were to poll early childhood educators in our association, you will find there is sudden panic and fear among early childhood educators about that possibility, for precisely the observations you make: the stratification, just how different the education system is for early childhood education and how it is not particularly holistic in its approach. It does not look at the individual needs of a child. It looks only at the cognitive things, not all the other social factors that impact on a person's ability to learn. That is the perception, and there would be this real fear that instead of the nice things about early education influencing the rest of the education system, the culture of the rest of the education system would demolish what we know to be true of early childhood education.

It would be nice to see that approach to learning permeate through other levels of the educational institutions, but I think that would be a big problem. I do not know if it is insurmountable, but I think you are talking about generations of teachers—and administrations; not just teachers but administrations—turning around their thinking.

1630

Take a look at brand-new graduates out of the teaching institution. How long does it take them to get demoralized in an environment where the philosophy they have just learned at the university level is incongruent with what is actually practised out in the field? Not in every school board, not in every school, but I think it is a long haul before that kind of thinking ever comes about. It would have to be planned for particularly. I do not know how you would do that.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I know of, course, that the debate on this one has been out there in the ECE community for years. I just think things have changed dramatically. They changed, interestingly enough, because of Bill 30, in some fascinating ways. I think the two major public education systems now are going to move massively into day care, because they are going to see that as the means of getting the child and getting the funding for their systems. That is going to happen massively.

That being the case, and not then having a very two-tiered kind of system of what is happening in child care going on out there, it seems to me that early childhood educators really do need to be thinking very much not about how they are going to be subsumed by the education system, but rather how their values of education are going to be inflicted, if I can put it that way, upon the education system so that the kinds of notions

included in your definitions are in fact there in grades 1, 2 and 3 and, hopefully, extended for as long as is possible in terms of holistic notions.

I would suggest to you that as we, as a committee, start pursuing this further, early childhood educators should be seeing that they have a very specific role to be playing here in terms of confronting the other parts of the education system with some of the values in what you do; otherwise you will be left behind and unfortunately, I think, so will many of the kids in the future.

Ms. Winter: I might remark as well that people quite often put values to money. Who is paid the most in your educational system and who is paid the least in terms of salaries paid to teachers working with children? Is it a high school teacher teaching chemistry or is it an early childhood educator assistant who has the holistic training and all those values we talk about working in the kindergarten program?

Mr. Jackson: And promoted.

Ms. Winter: And promoted.

Mr. Jackson: In the other area of services, they do not get promoted from the elementary up to directors or superintendents.

Ms. Winter: That is right. I do not think early childhood education training is particularly valued in the education system as much as maybe an administration degree, so that you can get on with being a principal, or as much as some of the other training that you can get specializations in.

Madam Chairman: Mrs. O'Neill for the final question.

Mrs. O'Neill: Before I ask the question, I think there is a new value being put on primary education. I certainly think the early-identification project, the new emphasis on the lower pupil-teacher ratio, the choice of many men to teach in primary, all of that, in my humble opinion, is very healthy. I think there is a new profile for primary education.

Your presentation to us is somewhat outside of that. I was most concerned about your statement—and I want you to tell us a little more—that in the environment in which you work day to day the child at age 10 is already one grade behind. That must be very frustrating for you. It is certainly something we intimate a lot. I do not know how many of us are in day-to-day contact with what must be considered a great tragedy.

Could you tell us what strategies you would suggest or what interventions the school could make, even if there are some models you can point to, which would help to prevent that; or is it

unpreventable? Is it something that happens because, as you suggested, if the environment in which this child is learning, whether that be in a day care environment or a school, is not congruent with what the parent wants, then things are not going to go well? From your experience, is there anything we could do that would help that situation?

Ms. Winter: I am so glad you asked. There is lots. Again, I come back to the fact that it is not the Ministry of Education alone; I would just love for that local school to be playing a very visible, co-operative role with a parents' association. There probably is not one that exists with that income group, that group of children you talk about. Just lowering the profile of the teacher with the parents—the parents' knees knock together just to walk through the front door of the school because it reflects an authority figure that they have grown up with. And yet, these children are going to be there all day and their education is going to be less because of that.

Parents should get to know the school personnel as their friends, people who have the interests of their child at heart; and then get to know the other social service agencies in that community. In the system as a whole, I think education needs to co-operate with health and social services.

There is a report that has just come out from the Ministry of Health that says poverty helps children to fail in life miserably; that where children experience poverty, there need to be additional resources, especially when the children are five years old and younger, in order for them to do well in the educational system and in order for them to survive as good citizens in this society.

For education just to wave the flag and say, "We're going to do it," is not going to be very productive or make the best use of resources that we have. There is the health department, there are social services, there is the children's aid, there are the local churches, there are the boys' and girls' clubs, there is the local association for early childhood education, there are all kinds of groups that have some interest in the children of that community. I think all those systems need to work together some way, both at a macro level, from ministry to ministry, right down to the little neighbourhood school that has a commitment to parents.

I personally have seen this. We have a day care program in our boys' and girls' clubs. Many of the parents do not speak English and when one particular family, I can recall, was called to the school for a case conference because their child

was failing, the parents were mortified because they had no clue. They really did not want to go to this case conference where there was going to be the principal, the social worker, the psychologist and the teacher.

They were going, expecting the bad news message. It was the day care worker who dealt with the parents' fear, because the parent was just almost crying when she came to drop off her child. She said, "I have to go to the school this morning." So the day care worker went over it with them and that was the best thing that could have happened, because it lowered the tension level. The parents felt that they had an advocate who could speak English and understand all these people with suits on—that kind of thing—and could relate very well to the school, and there was much better communication and understanding that went on. Yes, the child did have difficulties, but it was the way in which it was communicated. Now the parents are much more supportive of an at-home program for that child that is also emphasized in the day care program.

But it took the astute observation of one day care worker, who is over-worked as it is, at the beginning of the day, to say: "This doesn't need to happen. Why is Mrs. So-and-so going into this little diatribe? What can we do to help?" Why would the school not think of that in the first place? This is a family that does not have the communication skills. It took the school an awfully long time to communicate with the family that they had to come into the school. Why would the school not go to the parents' home for the interview, where the parents might be more at ease? Thinking of those sorts of things and thinking on behalf of the families would go a long way.

Mrs. O'Neill: Do you think it is possible to have that inter-relationship within the community without them all being in the same building? I guess I am talking about the Ministry of Community and Social Services, the Ministry of Health and the school administration.

Ms. Winter: Oh, sure, I think it is very possible. I think of the early childhood network, for example, where representatives such as myself and those of various kinds of early childhood programs—the Ys, the boys' and girls' clubs, the nonprofit, the commercial—will get together in various communities across Ontario to share information at a different level and in the interests of each other. I do not see why the schools could not be in on that, except that they just do not do it at the moment, or not in my

experience at any rate. I could just see the value of that occurring in local neighbourhoods.

Mrs. O'Neill: Some teachers do belong to your organization, do they not?

Ms. Winter: A few, yes.

Mrs. O'Neill: OK, thank you.

Ms. Ellison: Could I just extend Carolyn's comments by directing you to some American research that directly addresses the issue of socio-economic deprivation in young children and subsequent behavioural problems as school dropouts in the later years? This research has been going on in the United States since 1962.

It occurs in Ypsilanti, Michigan and it is being done by Dr. David Weikart, and it is known as the high/scope model. It is at the moment the longest-going, longitudinal research study in the United States, which points out very clearly that if children and parents are together in programs in the early years, and there is a set of activities for parents to learn how to parent and the child is also involved in an early childhood program—child and parent together and then move into the school system, if that can be supported throughout the school system, the long-term social benefits are clearly economic. There is a reduction in juvenile delinquency. There is a reduction in incarceration. There is a reduction in unemployment. This research team has clearly documented that, and I would refer you to that.

1640

Madam Chairman: I would like to thank the association for your presentation today and for the contribution you have made to our committee.

Ms. Winter: Best of luck to your committee.

Madam Chairman: Thank you.

Patiently waiting are our last presenters of the day, the British Heritage Institute. We apologize for the delay, gentlemen. Would you like to come forward and introduce yourselves. If you would like to be seated—Hansard would not pick up your voice unless you are seated. Thank you.

BRITISH HERITAGE INSTITUTE (CANADA)

Mr. Reid: My name is McReady Reid. I am vice-chairman of the British Heritage Institute of Canada and I would like to introduce my colleague and fellow delegate, Dr. Jack Blyth. Jack is a teacher of history and politics at the Sheridan Community College. I wish also, Madam Chair, to apologize for the inability of our president, Cecil Thom, actually the founder of the British Heritage Institute, to be here at this

presentation. I would just like to say to you and your committee how much we appreciate the opportunity to have this presence here.

Madam Chairman: Welcome, Mr. Reid. I do notice that you have quite an extensive brief and, as you probably heard my instructions to the previous delegation, you are free to use your half hour howsoever you choose, although we do like time if possible at the end for members' questions. You may want to précis part of it, if that would assist in giving us enough time to ask questions.

Mr. Reid: We will see if we can gallop through this, Madam Chairman.

Madam Chairman: Proceed to gallop.

Mr. Reid: Thank you. We have titled our brief, Canada's Forgotten Children: A Lost Heritage. I thought of titling this, *Why Throw Out the Parent with the Bath Water?*, but maybe that was not funny enough.

We would like to make reference to our concerns in the context of current realities and so we pose the question, is patriotism possible in a multicultural society or is nationhood possible? Cultural diversity, we know, is a historic fact of Canadian life. It has grown largely from bicultural beginnings. But especially in the past short decade, the makeup of the Canadian community has undergone profound change which has altered dramatically the very complexion of our nation.

We felt that perhaps the *Globe and Mail* recently answered this question in a sense with the statement:

"...Canada is a multicultural state in harmony with official bilingualism, in a federal country of regions, with two founding peoples who arrived after the first nations had lived here for eons. Integration of cultures into a common citizenship is not, apparently, where Canada is heading. This may be inevitable and it may be fine but it deserves more honest reflection."

We ask, however, need it be multiculturalism versus patriotism? Perhaps official multiculturalism, rather than separating us, could be the very tie that binds, and we believe that this is the challenge that will face not only educators today but in the foreseeable future. We are concerned that government legislation may not help to lessen tensions, bitterness and create a more harmonious, unified country. It seems unlikely, in view of the tension, misunderstanding and distrust that continues years after our coexistence as a nation, we remain divided regardless of the lofty resolutions of the Meech Lake accord. In

fact, the accord is for many, as we know, a further divisive factor.

There is a dire need to heal our divisions in order to create a Canada that shares a sense of identity. Our hope lies, we believe, with the ensuing generations of Canadians who are born, hopefully, into a more tolerant society and guided by more tolerant educators.

In this pursuit of the provincial policy—and I refer to the 1986 guidelines, which refer to the ministry's policy on official multiculturalism. It was written by qualified educators, but unfortunately, the guidelines, we believe, are flawed by serious omissions. Our purpose is not to be critical of the guidelines in terms of total content. We have a rather narrow focus on the specific issue of multiculturalism as it pertains to the committee's fundamental goals, an equal life chance and the full development of each student.

While the opportunity to explore multiculturalism in these guidelines is considered "particularly suited to fulfil the expectations of the official policy of the government of Ontario," they fail, we believe, to offer course development that would provide a historical link to our British past.

I would like Dr. Blyth to continue with our presentation at this juncture.

Dr. Blyth: We have said in our brief that the methodology here places more emphasis on form than on substance. It is notable when you read it that words such as "Britain," "France," "British" and "England" do not appear. I have been marking essays for many years and it is no surprise to me that students cannot spell the word "Britain." It is B-R-I-T-I-A-N. It is not the fault of the students. I do not think they get the exposure that would make them familiar with even the spelling of that word.

The course on American history seems to have a sort of typical chronological pattern. Basically, the position of the British Heritage Institute is that the teaching of American history has at least the virtue that some attention is paid to the debt the United States acknowledges to Britain. We have not heard of any American children of British origin being treated in the Canadian fashion, where British culture is deliberately ignored in the pursuit of ethnic studies.

I would like to go on just to talk about the structure of the curriculum. This is a commentary which is intended to be constructive and contain some suggestions. History courses, and in particular the course called *Civilization and History*, have this global approach and scan 3,000 years. It struck us, when we were looking

at this, that there is no mention of the Commonwealth, which has a quarter of the world's population. We have a lot of immigrants coming in from Hong Kong, the West Indies and India. There is also a link here to Canada in that the famous report of Lord Durham, in the 1840s, talked about the question of trusting people and giving them responsibility. Certainly, this has gone out across the Commonwealth.

I can speak with a little firsthand experience. I spent two years in India during the Second World War. I can see what the effect of education was. It is very revealing that with the education of people like Pandit Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi, it was inevitable that they would seek independence. This would be a natural product of education. I think we have a similar situation around Toronto right now with nomination meetings, seeing groups of people come in with a particular ethnic background. They are seeking their rights, their independence and their representation. So we are suggesting that the curriculum might be looked at in terms of the immigrant flow into Canada.

History should be a national treasure and, therefore, nonpolitical in terms of party allegiance. Yet, when you read the course objectives for Course Design in the Twentieth Century, you get the impression that probably Brian Mulroney had a hand in some of this. I am going on to the top of page 4 of our brief. English-French relations could be related, of course, to the Meech Lake accord, the Canadian-American relations to free trade and international relations would reflect the interests of Joe Clark. Surely, it is important to point out the broader values on which our society rests in terms of our political, economic and social heritage. Multicultural societies evolve because of the tolerant political and social climate within our society. Our parliamentary tradition is clearly derived from Westminster.

I do not think I will say any more, because I noticed the display as I came in which related to the parliamentary tradition. I do not think we need to spend any time on that, really, other than to observe that the right to dissent was established centuries ago.

1650

The social welfare net that we have obviously traces back to British precedents in terms of old age pensions, health coverage and unemployment insurance. I again have an interest in this. In 1970 I was sufficiently interested in some of these things concerning society, and I noticed in watching it on television that one of the

presentations you had from a delegation talked about societal values, that we should address some of these in education. Rather than complain about things, I sat down and wrote a book called *The Canadian Social Inheritance*, and I talked about things such as poverty, health, liquor legislation—things of everyday concern.

I would suggest here that we are not talking about any political tradition related to parties, because clearly the British experience was that when it was brought in during 1945 by a Labour government—and it was ultimately copied by Tommy Douglas in Saskatchewan with medicare in 1961—they were using a plan, the Beveridge report, which was developed by a Liberal.

I am old enough to remember when the legislation of Lloyd George, the 1911 health insurance, used to cover everybody and we used to be on the club, so to speak; so there is a Liberal tradition. There is also a Tory tradition here, what Disraeli called sewage policy or sanitation policy instead of environmental studies. It struck me when I was thinking about this that maybe if we called things by those terms, we would clean up the beaches of Toronto a lot faster; if we stopped talking about environmental concern and talked about sewage, we would probably tackle this a lot faster. And when you transpose this to Canada, clearly the federal government is Liberal and the other parties at the provincial level. This is not a party issue.

Students of British origin are denied access to these heritage language programs and information about traditions that have a major contribution towards the evolution of multiculturalism. This is related to the model student, the guidelines that are provided for the model student, and I am moving to the top of page 5 of the brief. We looked at this model student as derived from the Ministry of Education guidelines, *Issues and Directions*, of 1980.

I am not going to read this but just try to paraphrase it. This proposes a student who is confident, has many accomplishments, is ethical, altruistic, cultured, methodical, capable of synthesis, perceptive, creative, intuitive, resourceful. This does not seem to be like some of the kids I have taught in the Ontario school system.

Mr. Reid: Ministry guidelines of 1988 maintain the image of the extraordinary learner and recommend within a course unit entitled *Multiculturalism* an impressive list of objectives which begin with the expectation that the student will develop and retain his personal identity by

becoming acquainted with the historical roots of his community and the culture of origin.

Then there are another five objectives, which I will skip through: develop an understanding and appreciation of the roots of our Canadian heritage through a study of the contributions and experiences of the various people who have participated in the development of Canada; develop an understanding and appreciation of the history of cultures and civilizations in other parts of the world, and especially those that form the background of Canada's multicultural population. I think the Premier (Mr. Peterson) in a recent statement during Heritage Week indicated that we could have as many as 100 distinct groups here in the province, if not Canada.

We are to see a student develop an understanding and appreciation of the points of view of ethnic and cultural groups other than their own; develop an understanding of such concepts as community, conflict, co-operation, culture and independence; and finally, learn the social skills and attitudes for effective and responsible participation and co-operation in a multicultural society.

Now, for ordinary mortals, these sweeping objectives in this unit, Multiculturalism, would seem to indicate the daunting prospect of a lifelong pursuit of knowledge. Nevertheless, we believe the approach of this course could be the first step on the road to help fulfil our nationhood through achieving harmony and understanding, somewhat idealistic perhaps but an essential and well-founded launching platform for the student. But we must repeat that this guideline is particularly well suited to fulfil the expectations of the official policy of multiculturalism of the government of Ontario. Therefore, we ask, why then is such a valuable approach to multiculturalism withheld until grade 9 or 10 and why is the course optional?

The Multicultural Society, which is the title of the unit, constitutes merely a single study unit within the course entitled *Living in a Changing World*, and it is a "program which may be offered at either grade 9 or 10 as an optional course." That is a quotation from the guidelines. Surely a program as supportive of the provincial policy of official multiculturalism should be mandatory, we believe; and in particular the unit, *The Multicultural Society*, which advocates a grasp of the concepts of co-operation and tolerance that are so essential to multicultural dialogue and harmony.

We ask should not this first step of achieving our nation's multicultural ideal not commence, if

not at the cradle where undoubtedly it should occur in the family, at the latest in early childhood care and then continue through elementary grades? The idea of inculcating the notion that our Canadian family has many branches needs to start, we believe, in the early grades.

Dr. Blyth: There is the argument that formal history must be left until the children are older. Social science consultants explain that history has to be sold at more senior levels and is considered pretty dull stuff; but it seems to me that just using the example of Pierre Berton and the writings that he has done about Canada, Canadian history is not dull, it is quite colourful.

What is of particular interest to us in thinking of younger children is to look at what I would almost call foundation learning prior to learning Canadian history, say, around grades 3 and 4. Here we illustrate in the brief the story of Robin Hood fighting the wicked Norman baron in a multicultural society in and around Sherwood Forest.

It seems to me there are a number of interesting points here; first of all, language. The baron speaks French and Robin Hood speaks English. It is a bilingual society. In a cultural sense, the baron lives in the castle and has this courtly behaviour. He is very sophisticated and Robin Hood is very simple. Above all, I think the students quickly grasp the message of social justice, that Robin Hood believes in direct action, taking from the rich and giving to the poor.

We feel that the curiosity of young children is virtually insatiable, that they do have open minds. If I can just add this, there is also the case of King John and Magna Carta, the power struggle that is involved there. In the early 1960s, I was impressed when John F. Kennedy, when he was President of the United States, went over to Runnymede Meadow and unveiled a tablet which said, "We, the people of the United States, owe all our liberties to what happened in this meadow at Runnymede."

Mr. Reid: Therefore, we ask again, what better time to portray history and heritage or multicultural diversity and mutuality than early childhood? Incidentally, why must we be threatened by our multicultural diversity? Why do we not develop a national dialogue on our mutuality. What better age to begin such a dialogue than when students are young and keen to learn, when differences in skin colour, creed and religion fail to interfere with the youngsters' appreciation and acceptance of their classmates.

Through the medium of music, song, costumes and dance, the province's program of heritage is presently being portrayed in a restricted manner. Why is a program that is thought to be essential in a truly multicultural state only part of an extended school day in Toronto and elsewhere offered after school or on nonschool days? Why does the provincial program exclude children of British and French origin? Rightly, Canada's forgotten children ask their teachers and parents, "Do we not have a heritage too?" But in Toronto, certainly unhappily, they are segregated from their ethnic classmates and must sit idly in terms of educational productivity, while a heritage language program is offered to other ethnics.

1700

These so-called language programs are fortunately being considered or had been considered by Sean Conway's 1987 paper entitled *Proposal for Action: Ontario's Heritage Languages Program*. It did recognize part of the problem and provide part of the solution. I quote here from the actual paper. It describes the initiatives that the Ministry of Education is proposing to enhance the provision of heritage language instruction for elementary school students. It admits to "concerns at the fragmentation of educational experiences, which relate also to children not involved in heritage language instruction during the regular school day." It admits that "different but equally appropriate and relevant learning experiences must be afforded these students while their classmates are attending heritage language classes."

The paper does not conclude with, but it does provide the information statistically that in 1987, 72 school boards offered more than 4,000 classes in 58 heritage languages to more than 90,000 students.

Dr. Blyth: We suggest that the heritage language programs are really cultural programs as it is almost impossible to teach a language without reference to the geography, the country or people associated with that language. In these language programs, no provision is made for the children of British origin to study their cultural inheritance, although people like Sir John A. Macdonald or Sir Winston Churchill helped to provide the setting for today's Canada.

Tragically for the children, there is the assumption by many English Canadian parents that the English or the British roots of Canada are explained to children in the schools as was done in their childhood, but nothing could be further from the truth. Much of the historical links have

been quietly phased out of the Ontario school curriculum. We raise two questions here. The first is why cannot children of British origin be given equal opportunity to study their inheritance so that the equality clause in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms has real meaning, which refers to national or ethnic origins? The other question is why cannot Canadian history be taught to express the fundamental values on which our society rests? It should be pointed out, moreover, that our British roots convey a tolerance which is in the very best traditions of the goal of multiculturalism.

The fundamental goals of education must include both knowledge and values. Certainly, students are entitled to an education that provides an opportunity to develop to the full their individual talents—and I am sure you have heard of this, that everybody should be developed individually—yet full development also needs to include exposure to the fundamental values which we hold as a society, in other words the collective responsibility that citizens owe to one another.

This is not only a question of rights, it is also a question of responsibilities. Watching on television some of your hearings, I saw the presentation by the retail trade in which they mention the work ethic. Surely this would involve responsibility to an employer. To use an illustration, the Volvo company in Sweden decided to do away with the production line and install teams so that people had pride in their craftsmanship when they went to work.

The British constitutional framework which we have imported into Canada has provided the underpinning of society that can accommodate the change. Here I am going to use two or three examples of things that predated the Charter of Rights. First of all, there was the Quebec Act, where in 1774, Roman Catholics received full civil liberties in Canada at a time when they did not even have them in the United Kingdom. Secondly, there was an acceptance of the culture. Later came the Durham report, where we had the famous phrase "two nations warring in the bosom of a single state," which is still a fairly good description of probably what has been going on recently. What we are talking about there is trust and responsible government.

There is also, we realize, a very pragmatic school of thought in Ontario that says school education is training workers. The Premier's Council recently identified a problem in trying to steer Ontario into a world economy, and the reference was to illiteracy among school leavers.

We are suggesting that a component of British heritage should be done in the English language and this might help with this question of literacy.

In summary, we are not seeking special status or privilege. We just merely ask that British ethnicity be recognized, that we be included as one of the ethnic groups. Multiculturalism is surely intended to promote tolerance, and even a small British component would help the understanding of the Canadian family. There is no valid reason why children of British origin must be ignored by educators.

Children should not be short-changed by the complacent assumption of some parents that discussion of the British heritage still exists in the curriculum. We request that equal opportunity be given to the children of British origin to study their inheritance during the time allocated to the other ethnics for language programs. This implies a program that would include a knowledge of the historical and constitutional links to Britain which would, furthermore, imply a balanced study of Canadian history.

As a final point, what we are really talking about here is complacency, that the illusion that we can take things for granted does not bear up under examination. Two experiences we have had with British heritage I should share with you. One was a call we had from Senator Eugene Forsey from Ottawa pointing out that the question of the head of state, the Queen of Canada, was being discussed in terms of possibly phasing this out. That could not be taken for granted. We corresponded with the relevant minister, David Crombie, on that.

We also had an experience with one of our members, who is a veteran, and approached a high official in the Ministry of Education as to why the Second World War, 1939 to 1945, was allocated 45 minutes in the curriculum. The response was that they did not want to upset any of the children of German or Italian parents. This seems to be almost like tearing leaves out of the history book, the sort of thing that George Orwell talked about in 1984, that you get rid of things. Even Gorbachev recently has been talking about getting back to history and getting away from the Stalinist story.

Our central concern is that consideration be given to looking at the curriculum so as to include British ethnicity or ethnic roots in Ontario or Canada's history, because at the moment there seems to be an illusion on the part of many parents that this is actually being done in the curriculum. We would like to terminate there, if we may.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. I know you attempted to gallop through, but I think we have only a couple of minutes left for questions. There is some time, if anybody would like to make a quick comment or ask a question.

Mrs. Marland: I think this is an excellent presentation and obviously a very critical one in terms of the overall direction of education in Ontario in 1988. I think what has happened in the direction of some of the programs in education in Ontario which has resulted in the necessity for this kind of presentation today has not happened intentionally. It started off addressing what was a void and was needed. I think this deputation would be the first to acknowledge that. How ironic it is, as often happens in many situations, that while you try to address one area, you end up with almost a reverse discrimination in trying to solve one problem.

1710

I am wondering whether through your organization, which I recognize is not only provincial but a national organization—and we commend you for being part of this newly formed British Heritage Institute—have you had meetings with the Ministry of Education? Have you had feedback from them?

Mr. Reid: Yes, we had a delegation to the Ministry of Education early in 1987. Unfortunately, they were just concluding phase 2 of the new curriculum, so it was rather late in the day for us to be suggesting changes at that time. We have not heard subsequently from the ministry.

One of our members, as Dr. Blyth referred to, had the opportunity of having a meeting with the senior official to discuss certain aspects of the omissions that are occurring, and we do refer to them as omissions largely. We acknowledge the fact that this, I am positive, was never done by intent. It is a matter of replacing something with something that is considered more vital for that particular period or that era.

As I attempted to be humorous in my remark about throwing out the parent with the bathwater, I think we are, in effect, trying to shake loose from our colonialism; but, by the same token, I do not think we can afford to ignore the intrinsic values of our historical past and we certainly cannot afford to neglect them. I think Ontario could reverse the role somewhat in recommending future curricula to the boards of education throughout the province.

Mrs. Marland: Have you sought help from other organizations outside of education to help secure what it is that you want to achieve?

Recognizing the heritage program for other ethnic backgrounds that Canada has now been built on, the other major half being French but including the many, many other countries that have contributed to the cultural mosaic and the cultural growth and development of our great country, have you reached out to other organizations to help support this aspect of education in Ontario?

Mr. Reid: We have not had the opportunity to investigate the possibility of seeking help as directly as you suggested, but our intention with the foundation of the British Heritage Institute was originally to look at helping to effect a united Canada and a Canada with a strong identity. That was basically the purpose. Excuse the word "basic;" it is anathema to some people.

The fundamental goal was to meet with multicultural groups, become a part of these groups and to dialogue with them, so that just as we came to understand their concerns and to sympathize with their needs, we too wanted them to understand that we have our concerns as well with this dramatic immigration into our country in the past 10 to 20 years. It has been very, very dramatic, as we said. Certainly, from the membership response we have had in the past year, these concerns are expressed every time someone contacts us with regard to membership. They are quite anxious about what is happening in the structure and the status of their society and within the country.

We feel that what is happening in our country, idealistically, is a superb thing, but unfortunately, we are just asking for consideration to be given to the people who had a different understanding of what it was all about when they arrived here.

My family goes back any number of generations. I have always considered myself a Canadian and I had difficulty admitting that I am an ethnic. I suppose this is something that from here on I have to accept, that I am one of the ethnic peoples of Canada, but I would rather say that I was a Canadian of such-and-such a cultural background. I think that is what should really come first; but obviously, we are seeking to accent and accentuate the distinctive differences that each of us brings to this country. I think that in itself is worth while too.

Mrs. Marland: Do you see that from the ethnic communities in the province, since we are limited to dealing with Ontario, what I have seen as a personal experience, that most of the new ethnic cultures that have come to our province since the war are people who, first of all and

primarily, want to say that, yes, they are Canadians first and whatever else second, be it British, European or whatever? You are nodding, so I guess you agree that is happening.

All you are saying simply to this committee is that we must not lose it through our educational curriculum, because one or other at the exclusion of any would be totally wrong. Your message is to maintain the cultural mosaic of our heritage by making sure that no one group is excluded.

Mr. Reid: Jack, do you have a response?

Dr. Blyth: Yes, I think that is true. This is just a comment: It seems to me that what Britain went through with the multicultural mix in the 1950s started to arrive in Ontario in the 1960s. We accept that, regardless of the colour or whatever background people have, they come to Canada to better their lot. I think Stephen Leacock put it very well. He said, "People who live in castles don't emigrate." Obviously, people who come here want to better themselves economically and they want to be Canadian.

Some of the students who talk to me make it very, very clear that they want to join the family, that they do not want to be treated distinctly. In fact, some of them even fight their own families on this issue. People from the old country are maybe in one world, and the new generation has grown up in Canada, has gone through the school system and is Canadian. Certainly, we accept the multicultural society as it is. We are just saying that one of the strands here must not be overlooked. We must not overlook the contribution, to a large extent, that the British ethnic group has made and, in particular, the fact that if it had not been for the type of tolerant traditions that existed, we probably would not have a multicultural society in the first place.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. We will go on to Mr. Cooke.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I have just a comment. I must confess that I am somewhat confused by your presentation. I finished high school in 1971, and I went and talked to some of the people who are still in the system to get an idea of how much things have changed in terms of what is taught at the elementary level and what options are available at the secondary level.

I came out of the system thinking to myself that too much of the history that I was taught was British history, and then the balance of it was American history. Certainly Canadian history, when we were taught the explorers and how this country was settled, is all British and French history, which is still taught in grades 7 and 8 in our system.

But when we are talking about heritage languages and maintaining the tradition in families, Italian families or families now from Vietnam or other countries, we are not talking about the same thing at all. It is different altogether in that it is not available in the school system unless it is tagged on through the heritage language programs that are in the various communities.

As a person with a British background, I certainly never felt deprived and never felt unaware of my Canadian history, which obviously is very much tied up with British and French history. I do not know that it has changed that much in the system. It is still mandatory in grades 7 and 8; it is part of the Canadian history courses. There are optional courses available at the secondary level.

I must confess I am somewhat confused. I do not think you can make the same argument for British history and British heritage that there is in other cultural groups within our society. I can think of the Greek community in my riding, or the Serbian community; if they did not have heritage language programs, if they did not have history programs that they offered right in their community centres to the children and to the adults, their heritage would die very quickly, because it is simply not available in the elementary and secondary school systems. I think British and French history are very much available.

1720

I must also say that people of British stock in my community have never attempted to express or expressed the desire you have. Quite frankly, I am not sure you express a concern that is shared by a large number of people in our province; at least I hope it is not shared by a large number of people in the province.

Mr. Reid: May I respond to the early expression you made, Mr. Cooke? When you attended school, it is likely there was a course of British studies; there is no such course of British studies offered in Ontario at the present time.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I think there should be a course of Canadian history; I do not think there should necessarily be a course of British studies.

Mr. Reid: If I can get back to responding to your statement of perhaps being overloaded with British history up to 1971, that is part of the response. The other response is that if Canadian history were taught, we believe the way it should be taught is in its extensive form. We are not expressing any concern here for the lack of

British history as much as we are for the lack of historical facts about Canada as they related to the contribution made by Britain to the foundation of this nation. That is where we find serious omissions in the existing curriculum.

The founder of this particular organization was a master of Toronto Teachers' College for, I believe, 10 or 12 years, and until recently a principal in the Peel Board of Education. We have a number of educators involved with our directorate who are presently teaching in Ontario and we have had any number of responses from people who are in education that are empathizing, and from outside of Toronto, I might add.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: There is a mixed message coming out of this because, on the one hand, at the beginning of the presentation you were talking about heritage language programs, heritage programs which are tag-ons at the end of the classroom, and now you are talking about mandatory programs and improving Canadian history and British history within the regular day.

Mr. Reid: I am sorry, I think that is a misunderstanding. Did you want to respond, Dr. Blyth?

Dr. Blyth: If I may comment, first of all I think what we basically said is that when the heritage language program takes place, the British children should not be excluded. At the moment, we had one case of a parent who went to the Toronto school board and complained that the child asked: "Why am I excluded from this little process? Why can't I learn something during this period?" The guidelines we looked at were basically those of the separate schools. They were the guidelines we looked at. We did not look at grades 7 and 8.

As far as the response is concerned: We have had no advertising; the bulletin you received is hot off the press, I think in about the last two days; it is the first piece of printed material that has gone out. We have somewhere over 500 members, and most of this has been done by word of mouth. We have done no advertising, and I think the general reaction is that people have contacted us because they had heard about us and are expressing some concern that, as Mr. Reid said, we do not throw out the parent with the bath water.

We are not claiming there is a massive response out there right now, but it just is really in its early stages. As I said, we have done no advertising, but even at this stage there are people from coast to coast who have expressed some concerns that the British strand not be lost. I agree with Mr. Cooke that there were two

elements here: one was the history curriculum that is taught and the second is the heritage language programs. All we are asking about the heritage language programs is whether children of British origin should sit idle in that time frame.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: But they are tag-ons at the end of the day, are they not? I do not come from Toronto, but that is my understanding.

Mr. Reid: Toronto implemented an extended school day in 1985. Sean Conway, in his white paper of last year, indicated that they were looking at making this particular program mandatory throughout the province. It could be implemented on three bases: an extended school day, after the school day or on weekends. That is only what was recommended or considered in the paper.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I just wanted to make it clear. First, you indicated that you did not look at the grades 7 and 8 curriculum and what is taught. I think it is reasonably unfair to make the presentation you have made without any reference to the fact that there are two years at the elementary level where Canadian history is taught, with significant French and English roots.

Second, to give the impression that kids of British stock are sitting in school twiddling their thumbs while kids from other ethnic backgrounds are going to heritage language programs is just not accurate.

Mr. Reid: I beg your pardon, we stated that applied to Toronto. It is in our brief and I stated here a few minutes ago that the extended school day applied to Toronto.

I said "idle" in terms of, for example, the suggestion that in order to provide for the children, to make way for an ethnic group that was using that particular classroom, whether it was Oriental or Greek or whatever, the children who had to leave were dismissed to a library. They could not leave the school. They had to wait until the school day was completed.

At one point it was suggested to parents that they had certain options for occupying these children, and the Cree language was suggested. But seemingly they could not get a consensus on that. According to one of the parents who was involved in the groups—and these groups came from various schools and were protesting the fact that their children, who were of British origin, were being denied, first, the opportunity for heritage language; and second, it seemed to them that they were being victimized by having to stay in the school and not have the opportunity to have proper instruction, and it was stated quite clearly

that this would likely disadvantage the other children who at that time were occupied with learning their heritage language.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Reycraft has been waiting very patiently to ask a final question or make a final comment.

Mr. Reycraft: Thank you, Madam Chairman. I thought you were going to use your huge majority on this committee to stifle my question, so I am glad to get the opportunity to ask it.

First of all, supplementary to Mr. Cooke's question and the response to it: I do not think it is fair to say that students in Toronto who do not participate in the heritage language programs during the extended school day are sitting around twiddling their thumbs. I think activities are organized for those students by their teachers. The suggestion was made in the response that some of them are just sent to the library. That is not such a terrible sentence, I would suggest. I know of many parents who wish their children had more time to spend in the library than they do now.

I want to go back to the principle of the heritage language programs. They were established because it was felt that in order to properly understand and maintain a sense of their culture and heritage, young people needed to know the language. It was believed that the school system was the best vehicle through which to deliver that particular service. I accept the argument that has been made by Dr. Blyth and Mr. Reid that in learning a heritage language, there is some discussion and some education on heritage that occurs, but the principle purpose of the program is language. The heritage aspect of the program is strictly supplementary, and it is a side effect.

If we were to do what you have suggested and extend heritage language programs to people of British descent, that principle would change, because the main principle of those programs would have to be heritage, not language, unless there is some other language that is going to be taught there. Other than Gaelic, I cannot think what it might be at this point, although that perhaps is a good one to take on. But do you not agree that would then create another inequality?

Mr. Reid: It could be considered as such. Again, Sean Conway's paper, recognizing a possible problem if they proceeded with the proposal within the paper to make this whole program mandatory—as it has not been, and they have had concerns of course with the fact that the Scarborough board has chosen to ignore it—indicated that given the extension of this and the mandatory nature of it, they then would have to

address the concerns of those children who were neglected as a consequence of this. I use the word "neglected" only in the sense that they were not receiving a heritage language program, they would not qualify. So he suggested that there be relevant appropriate educational opportunities for them for that period of time.

I might go on record that I was with the Peel Board of Education for four years in the 1970s as a trustee. During that period of time we discussed the implementation of heritage language. I, for one, supported it and I am not opposed to it at the present time. All we are suggesting is that if we are diminishing the extent to which we are able—and we have listened to explanations and concerns expressed in the last two days about not having the opportunity—are we going to extend all our educational days? Are we going to extend the educational year? What do we drop? What was implemented when the teaching of British studies was dropped? Something replaced it, obviously.

It is not our responsibility to say how you implement this. Our concern is that we bring to your attention that there is an honest-to-God anxiety out there among a large number of people of British origin who feel that they have been

neglected and their heritage is being overlooked in a multicultural society.

The excuse that has been given is that we are one of the two founding nations, that English is the language that is being used and therefore this is not necessary. But in the process, it is just a diminishing of the extent to which Canadian history, which involves British history, and the development of Canada, which involves Britain, are being reduced in our province. That is the concern we have in addressing you today.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much, Mr. Reid and Dr. Blyth, for attending before our committee today. I would like to thank our viewers for joining us. This session will be rebroadcast this evening. We hope you will join us tomorrow at 10 o'clock when the select committee on education reconvenes to discuss the philosophy and goals of education.

Dr. Blyth: May we thank you and the committee for the privilege of hearing us out.

Madam Chairman: Thank you both for coming.

The committee adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

CONTENTS

Wednesday, July 20, 1988

Philosophy and Goals of Education	E-159
Ontario Principals' Association	E-159
Ontario Association of Alternative and Independent Schools	E-167
Family Coalition Party	E-176
Afternoon sitting	E-183
Chiefs of Ontario	E-183
Association of Large School Boards in Ontario	E-190
Association for Early Childhood Education, Ontario	E-201
British Heritage Institute (Canada)	E-208
Adjournment	E-217

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Chairman: Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)
Vice-Chairman: Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)
 Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
 Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)
 Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)
 Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)
 Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)
 Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)
 Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)
 O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)
 Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)

Substitutions:

Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC) for Mr. Villeneuve
 McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L) for Mr. Mahoney

Clerk: Mellor, Lynn

Staff:

Porter, Ann, Research Officer, Legislative Research Service

Witnesses:

From the Ontario Principals' Association:

Moore, L. John, President Cranbury, Andy, Ministry Liaison

From the Ontario Association of Alternative and Independent Schools:

McBurney, Lyle, Executive Director

Anjema, Olga

Routledge, Bob, Vice-President

Priesnitz, Wendy, President

From the Family Coalition Party:

Hogg, David A., Education Critic

DiRocco, Louis, Policy Director

From the Chiefs of Ontario:

Peters, Chief Gordon, Ontario Regional Chief

From the Association of Large School Boards in Ontario:

Nelson, Fiona, President

Parker, Carol, Trustee, Carleton Board of Education

Sparrow, Jane, Trustee, Windsor Board of Education

Best, Ted, Trustee, Ottawa Board of Education

From the Association for Early Childhood Education, Ontario:

Winter, Carolyn, President

Ellison, Anne, Chair, Professional Development Committee

From the British Heritage Institute (Canada):

Reid, McCready D., Vice-Chairman

Blyth, Dr. Jack A., Director



No. E-7

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Select Committee on Education

Philosophy and Goals of Education



First Session, 34th Parliament

Thursday, July 21, 1988

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

CONTENTS

Contents of the proceedings reported in this issue of Hansard appears at the back, together with a list of the members of the committee and other members and witnesses taking part.

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues can be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at (416) 965-2159.

Hansard subscription price is \$16.00 per session, from: Sessional Subscription Service, Information Services Branch, Ministry of Government Services, 5th Floor, 880 Bay Street, Toronto, M7A 1N8. Phone (416) 965-2238.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Thursday, July 21, 1988

The committee met at 10:08 a.m. in room 151.

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS OF EDUCATION (continued)

Madam Chairman: We will get started with this session of the select committee on education, as we continue our review of the philosophy of education and the goals as they pertain to the full life chances of the student and the full development of the student.

We are pleased to have before us today the Ontario Association of Deans of Education. We have Andrew Effrat and Laverne Smith. Welcome to our committee.

We suggest that you reserve a good portion of your presentation time for questioning. You are welcome to use the entire time for your presentation if you choose, but we are quite eager to ask you some stimulating questions, so we hope you will reserve some of your time for that.

Dr. Effrat: Modern pedagogy would suggest that we should leave time for interaction. We are pleased to do that.

Madam Chairman: Yes. We find the dialogue very helpful and very stimulating, so we appreciate that. Would you like to continue?

ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF DEANS OF EDUCATION

Dr. Effrat: I am here, as you noted, as chairperson of the Ontario Association of Deans of Education. I would not want to pretend to be speaking on behalf of all the deans on every issue, but I will try to reflect the consensus position.

I invited Laverne Smith, who is our associate dean of education at York University, not only to reflect our commitment to gender equity but also given her strong background in teacher education in schools and in universities education, as an administrator and as someone who has built one of the most unique and outstanding faculties of education, both in preservice and in-service in the province.

Ordinarily, I suppose one might start by expressing feelings of appreciation for this opportunity to address you, as well as commending you for looking at this very important issue. In the spirit of the frank dialogue I assume you

would like, I would like to start on a little different note. Frankly, to be dean of the largest, fastest-growing and most innovative faculty of education in the province and to take time to prepare a presentation has been a pain in the you-know-what.

The only reasons we are doing it, the kind of priorities we have, are to recognize, first of all, that education is in many ways one of the most central institutions to promoting equality of opportunity, to enhancing people's life chances and to addressing issues of quality of life. Second, we believe education is at a very significant historical crossroads, given the kinds of tensions and cross-pressures. In that sense, it is quite a sincere pleasure and privilege to be invited to address you.

There are two main things we would like to speak to: first, some general reflections on the philosophy and goals of education and what might be called an appreciation of the Ontario goals and philosophy; second, Laverne Smith will be speaking to some more specific aspects of teacher education and some of our concerns around the present context of teacher education in the province.

In considering the goals and philosophy, I am reminded of a story that is told about two medieval stonecutters who were asked what they were doing. One said he was cutting stone; the other said he was building a cathedral. I think that is one image of the kinds of different tensions, images and tendencies we are confronted with in what we want to do in developing an educated person and the focus not only for education but also for teacher education.

Let me turn then to our prepared text and move through some of the highlights of that. Certainly, the deans of education are very pleased that the general public consciousness, the media and the government are giving more attention to what we see as some of the major challenges—and I think have been concerned with as major challenges—confronting the education profession: issues of secondary school drop-outs, literacy rates, skill development, linkages of school and working, human resource development, measures of achievement in schooling and the like.

We also see and I think there is a growing awareness of the importance of issues concerning

gender equity, both in the way schools and curricula address female students and in all sorts of layers, including administrative layers and opportunities to promote gender equity; and of issues of equality of opportunity for francophone students, for people from northern Ontario communities, for people from more diverse cultural and economic backgrounds and the like. I think we see these and have long been concerned with these as issues and share and appreciate the attention they are now increasingly receiving.

I guess the major cautionary flag we would like to raise is a wariness about the potential narrowing and self-defeating outcomes that may arise from this renewed public attention on some of the concerns that might move us towards a more technocratic and meritocratic reform of schooling in Ontario.

We see back-to-the-basics movements, with their emphases on highly prescribed skills and standardized measures of achievement, as tending to focus essentially on cognitive skills and perhaps, worse yet, lower-level cognitive skills and cognitive skills in isolation of the whole person and broader social, emotional and affective dimensions.

We think the narrow methodology often used in studies designed to justify these directions is highly suspect in the selective choice of indicators of effectiveness, the kind of use of standardized achievement tests and the kinds of measures that they entail. Such studies and the prescriptions drawn from them tend to ignore higher-order cognitive abilities, such as problem solving, creativity, resourcefulness and self-direction, as well as noncognitive skills in the social, affective, aesthetic, physical and value domains which are central to human development, to full and equal participation in society and to quality of life.

We will comment on some of the prescriptions for specific matters to be dealt with by the select committee at the later implementation stage, at which we have been invited to make a presentation. In the meantime, without in any way backing away from the rightful expectation that educators in Ontario meet higher standards of excellence, we remain confident that this province will not accept simplistic solutions, which may be offered, that do not address education as the holistic, multilayered and complex human endeavour it is and must be seen to be for the full development of the individual and society as a whole.

We would ask you and, encourage you, not that you probably need it, to challenge all who would offer advice to you to speak to the full scope of the objectives which are presented to teachers, to look at our own history and progress in measuring our achievement of today and to consider the broad social measures, relative participation rates and social costs when comparing our society with others. Perhaps one example that might be noted here is that one often sees in studies of this sort comparing Ontario with other modern industrial societies that Ontario looks, perhaps at best, average in regard to this.

I think one of the questions one would trust is being asked is, are we comparing an élite that may be remaining in the schools in some of these other societies with a much broader participation rate that exists in Ontario? What if we looked at the top 25 per cent in Ontario and compared that with the top 25 per cent in other jurisdictions, for example? What if we looked at other measures of the social health of our province: mental health, suicide and homicide rates and the like? I think we would feel a lot more positive about what we are accomplishing. That is not meant to encourage smugness or complacency, but to say that I think we must look at a more sophisticated, complex, holistic picture.

Would you like to pause for questions or should I complete?

Madam Chairman: We usually like to save them for the end.

Dr. Effrat: Central to the strengths of Ontario's elementary and secondary schools has been progress towards a widely shared vision of the purposes of education, a vision which is rooted in an understanding that the full development of the abilities of all individuals and the betterment of our society are fundamentally intertwined. We think this understanding of what we as educators ought to be about in our work is currently reflected in the ministry's 13 goals of education.

There is both a comprehensiveness and a balance in these directives on what schools are to help all students to achieve. They focus educators' attention on the whole person in a whole societal context. We think this guiding vision provides some measure of protection within our educational jurisdiction from educational fads, scapegoating and simplistic panaceas which continue their cyclic destructiveness elsewhere.

Beyond this rich and multifaceted understanding of teaching and learning, we would argue that even were we to move back to a more unitary vision for education, with cognitive achievement

the sole or predominant objective, we think the nature of human learning and human diversity is such that we could have no confidence that we could make anything beyond limited progress toward the cognitive goal itself and then only for a limited range of those whose futures are entrusted to us.

The social cost for many individuals and for the province as a whole would be substantial were we to neglect the whole person, self-concept, motivation and the like, so that even if the cognitive emphasis was the major, the focal one, we think little progress could be made towards it if we were to neglect the broader and other dimensions of our humanity.

We would urge the select committee to reaffirm this balanced and integrated vision and not to accept false dichotomies in analyses of Ontario schools or proposals for change. In this province, educators have moved beyond accepting forced choices between important objectives, beyond teaching skills development or social and affective learning, beyond focusing on individual learning needs as opposed to having a general and overarching set of curriculum objectives, beyond choosing basic skills as opposed to promoting relevance.

Ontario has moved beyond these kinds of clarion calls for reforms which are not based on an understanding that quality education must reflect a synthesis of and recognize a synergistic relationship among these objectives as rich as human learning demands. It is only within this more sophisticated understanding that we can achieve the progress we all wish to see in meeting the concerns we noted at the beginning.

1020

We must affirm that every learner has a right to an education—and we note here a number of dimensions—which is meaningful and learner-centred, attending to cognitive, social, aesthetic, physical and affective growth; which provides the basic skills and knowledge which are required to survive, to develop as a human being with a positive sense of self-worth and to contribute to society; which conveys positive attitudes towards further learning and the self-reliance which leads to creativity, adaptability and resourcesfulness in one's work and living, and which is rooted in an understanding of the interdependence of people within societies and the environment, in a deep sense of responsibility to others and in an esteem for other cultures and beliefs, as well as one's own personal, ethical and religious beliefs.

This is not to urge, and we trust it is clear, complacency in the committee's work in addressing issues such as secondary school drop-outs, streaming, rates of illiteracy and so forth. Rather, we hope this would be heard as a plea that we hold to the course in our basic directions, while we move beyond our achievements to date in implementing the goals which have led us to this current stage of development. Let us look for the answers to problems in our schools within the context of the holistic understanding of human learning which we have achieved and which, in many ways, is very distinctive to and envied in this jurisdiction. Only within this realistic framework can we bring about a better society for all people in Ontario.

I would like to turn to Dean Smith for her comments.

Ms. Smith: I would like to speak now on the quality of teachers and teacher education. Equally fundamental to our understanding that the student is the *raison d'être* for schooling is the centrality of teachers to the current strengths and future progress of the Ontario school system. The single most important resource to education, the people on whose wisdom, skills and effectiveness we depend to deliver the goods, must have our highest priority and fullest support in their work and their professional development. Ontario enjoys a high-quality teaching force with a strong commitment to continuing education. Teacher education, both preservice and inservice, is a vital support to the further strengthening of our teaching force to meet the ever-increasing challenges of our schools.

A number of challenges also confront us in teacher education. In understanding these, it is important to attend to the full continuum of recruitment, selection, preservice and lifelong in-service teacher education. The context of teaching has changed dramatically over the past 20 years. We must do our part to allow the profession to further diversify its social, cultural and economic mix to ensure that schools better reflect the communities they serve.

The profession in Ontario appears to be at the early stages of a new teacher shortage, associated with population growth in some regions of the province and with acceleration in the rate of teacher retirements across the province. Access to the profession must be enhanced with particular attention also to special program areas experiencing growth, such as French-language areas.

Knowledge and skill demands on teachers have increased, thus requiring changes in the

structure and content of teacher education. Improvements to teacher education must address these demands in a co-ordinated fashion across the full continuum of pre-education, preservice, induction, in-service and graduate teacher education, and should respect the diversity of teacher education models across Ontario.

Within the early stages of teacher education, we welcome particularly the interest in forging new models for induction of new teachers to the profession based on co-operative efforts between teacher education institutions in the field. We have in place a highly developed, enviable and unique program of teacher in-service certification, the additional qualifications system, which provides for university-based and professionally focused studies in a wide range of program areas, and which does so in a fashion which can be readily adapted to changing knowledge and skill demands on teachers. The development of a general induction program for all new teachers would be an excellent complement to our in-service education system.

As increased resources are provided to preservice teacher education to ensure entry of the greater numbers of new teachers that will be needed, it will remain essential that we continue to provide systematic, university-based in-service education, as well as for the greater number of professionals who, at that point, will need the assistance.

To facilitate co-ordination of the increased emphasis on teacher education in Ontario, the Ontario Association of Deans of Education supports the establishment of an Ontario teacher education council or provincial advisory committee, with representatives of the universities, teachers' federations, boards of education, the ministries, with responsibility for advising the province generally on teacher education.

With this context as background, we wish to draw attention to a number of specific concerns which represent important hurdles to our work in preparing new teachers and in continuing teacher education.

Higher education in Ontario remains seriously underfunded, despite some improvements over the last two years. The scale of the expected teacher shortage should not, if it is attended to, threaten in-service and graduate education.

The linking of preservice and in-service education to the universities has been an important step in increasing the status of teacher education, to put it on a footing with other important professions. The Teacher Education Review Steering Committee is about to report on

its recommendations for changes to teacher education. It is of vital importance to the successful integration of theory and practice in teacher education, to the linking of teacher education to current research and development and to the maintenance of the professionalism of our teachers, that this placement of teacher education in universities remain firmly in place for all stages of the continuum in teacher education.

Ontario teacher education institutions are being held back in some instances in their natural development because of an unfortunate inequity that has arisen in the graduate education field. At the same time that Ontario's provincial appraisal system prevents the growth of graduate programs, non-Ontario universities offer graduate programs in this province without substantive review. It would be desirable for the province to phase in substantive reviews of all graduate programs offered in Ontario, similar in form to those in place now under the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies, and to expand funding for Ontario universities' graduate programs in education.

The Ontario student assistance plan regulations also need to be reviewed as they relate to the objective of helping to diversify the cultural, social and economic mix of those entering the profession.

Changes are under way in the regulations governing teachers' superannuation which will undermine employment mobility among leading professionals upon whom teacher education institutions depend for key appointments.

Dr. Effrat: In conclusion, we would like to urge an approach to the issues confronting schooling in Ontario that helps to develop people who are not only good stone-cutters but also can see themselves as participating in more meaningful enterprises, such as helping to build cathedrals, and that is respectful of the complexity of human learning and of the dignity of the children, youths and adults it is designed to serve.

It would be a serious misdirection, we feel, for Ontario to turn back to some unidimensional goal for education such as might be reflected in a declaration that education is ultimately or solely about cognitive learning and skill development. It is our view that education is ultimately about advancing human development, which, yes, includes very much the development of cognitive knowledge and practical skills, but also social, affective, aesthetic and physical development.

Even if it were possible to advance to a high level one's cognitive development, were it to be

at the expense or neglect of character development, of a mature sense of responsibility, of self-awareness and self-reliance, of resourcefulness or of the aesthetic awareness on which is based so much of what it means to be human and to enjoy life, such a direction would be ultimately a disaster for education, and in the end, for the life we all wish to continue to create in this province.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much, Dean Effrat and Professor Smith. We have very much enjoyed your presentation today. I have a number of members who have indicated they would like to ask questions. We will start off with Mr. Johnston.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am pleased to see the emphasis on the holistic approach, if I can put it that way, to education, and on not being lured into some of the one-dimensional answers that are being put forward in some quarters these days. I guess the difficulty I have is that although in the elementary panel I sometimes see child-centred holistic notions being developed, within certain limitations that I would like to come to in a second question, I really question whether or not that is happening at the secondary panel at all or how much it is.

It seems to me that the structures of learning in the secondary panel produce alienation from teachers because you do not have the same teacher all the way through your day. In fact, you have any number of them. You probably have a different mix of students in various classes as well. The notion of your individual holistic needs being met is virtually impossible in the structure because none of those teachers know you in all of your other parts within that context.

I guess I would like to hear some comments from you about the reality out there in the system now in terms of the forces that move away from that kind of philosophical approach, with the highly specialized approaches to teaching and the segmentation of the school day for students, especially in the secondary level.

1030

Dr. Effrat: I think we all very much recognize and appreciate the kind of tension there is, especially at the secondary level, between what might be called more subject-centred and child-centred approaches. My sense is that much of the ferment and development in secondary education over the past few decades has been in trying to build a system that makes secondary education a more personal, less alienated environment. The development of things like home rooms and home-room teachers is a part of that. There is the

increased role for guidance counsellors and how that has emerged over the years. As well, in general, in some teacher education establishments, there is the preparation of secondary teachers by involving them in intensive experience with elementary-type pedagogy and classrooms and so on.

I think, yes, it is a matter of concern. I think there has been some significant movement on that. If one looks at the diversity and complexities of dealing with adolescents, we can take some measure of pride in the degree to which there has been some achievement on that score, although I think there is recognition that there is room for further movement. I think people are looking in that direction of building a more child-centred, humane, less alienated environment in that area.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It just strikes me that this tension that is there has so many more pressures pushing in the other direction than it does in the coming together. I think in terms of the competitiveness which starts to become so much more of the school system as kids get ready for graduation. There is the whole notion of streaming. I really question just how holistic we can be when we are making some pretty interesting course selections. Limiting-style decisions are being made which run counter to that philosophy.

I am glad to hear you feel that essentially the pressure is going in the other direction. My own sense is that those other forces are much stronger and that in fact there is pressure downward into competitiveness, that earlier course selection decisions and career decisions are being made, back in the public school, and that this is the reality that is out there these days.

Dr. Effrat: I wish I could disagree more with some of the points being made. I guess we would anticipate, and our understanding is, that some of the issues like streaming and so on are to be more specifically addressed when we look at the implementation phase and would take into account some of the concerns and comments in more detail then.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: One of the areas I would like to go into is the whole question of the role of the teacher being key to all that and the preparation of teachers for our system. Let me deal first with what I see as one of the major failings in the system in terms of really recognizing where people come from, and that is the failure to deal with poor kids and to give them equal opportunity that will give them an equal outcome in the system.

I would like to hear some comments from you about the kind of training teachers are actually receiving that is going to make this generation of teachers any better equipped to deal with that particular failure of our system than teachers who have graduated in the past, and how much of that you see as something that is a lack of preparation and how much is all the other forces that are out there acting against those children and the teachers trying to deal with them in inner-city or rural poverty situations.

Ms. Smith: In looking at that question, we do not look just at the teacher training years and just at the specific courses we give teachers in training. We think it starts much earlier than that with the kind of people we choose for the profession. One of the big issues in teacher education must be the recruitment and the selection of teachers, to choose the right kinds of people, people who will be sensitive and who will want to be aware of societal needs in general.

We put a great deal of emphasis on that. We have actually begun a new program that really does a very heavy kind of holistic assessment of the incoming candidates and tries to select the right kinds of people. Once we have selected what we think are the right kinds of people, then of course we must look at the courses and the course of study. We try to make sure that the kind of course of study we give teachers is sociologically based and makes people aware of society in general, as well as much more bookish, academic sorts of pursuits.

As well, we work very hard at placing our teacher candidates in a broad array of schools, such that they encounter a variety of problems while they do their practicum work with the university. They are not given rose-coloured glasses and put in nice, middle-class schools throughout their training. That would be unfortunate for both them and their future students. At each stage of the game, whether it is selection, the actual seminars in the university or the practicum in the schools, we try to pay a great deal of attention to that.

We also are very concerned to draw a mix of teachers from various economic and ethnic backgrounds. We have in fact begun a very active policy this year of looking at the mixture of people in our teacher training program, the kinds of candidates we choose. We hope that by looking at that problem and that concern at all stages of teacher training, starting from before we actually come into our program, we will go a long way towards addressing the issue. We are certainly very concerned about it.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That is very interesting. When you say "we," are you talking about all the faculties or are you talking about York?

Ms. Smith: I am talking very specifically about York, but I do know from meetings with people in education around Ontario that there is concern. I think because we live in Metropolitan Toronto, we naturally focus our attention more on some of the things we see around us in an everyday way, and there are perhaps people in other parts of the province who do not see the same diversity we see. I do think we look and try harder because we are in a milieu that encourages that.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That raises two other points, if I may make them. One is the whole question of consistency among our teaching schools. I continue to get complaints from people who are graduating from schools about the quality of education, and in their terms, the differences in standards that they feel among the various schools of education around the province at this point. I am hoping this report that is forthcoming will maybe give us a better idea of how much of that is merely anecdotal, incorrect information, and how much does reflect a lack of standardization across the province in terms of how you implement programs to meet the goals you are talking about.

One of the things I am fascinated by is how it is we end up with manpower difficulties in education, health and other service sectors, which one would presume could be fairly highly predictable, using sophisticated computer technology that we have at the moment, and how our schools for teachers have not been able, from their perspective, from their part in all of this, to overcome those problems.

The information I hear for this fall is that we will have a deficit in terms of science educators coming out, and in math, in French, and perhaps for the first time in years, even in English. I wonder if you can let me know if that is factual or just what the extent of the shortages is going to be this fall. Then maybe we can get into a little discussion about how we overcome this problem, which has been pretty systematic now for the last few years.

Dr. Effrat: As you appreciate, it is a very complex problem to get a firm handle on, given the diversity of teaching staff in the boards, given the complexity of judgements individuals are making about their retirements and so on.

There is certainly anecdotal information that supports the impression that there are potential shortfalls in some select areas such as French,

and possibly now in science, but it is not the kind of systematic information that we now are in the process of gathering and trying to put in place in co-operation with the government. Our sense is that certainly for the coming year, things have turned around from the front-page stories of teacher surplus to at least a balance, if not some shortfall, and a growing shortfall overall.

1040

As to how we might improve upon our prediction and so on, we are in the process of putting into place some systematic information gathering and maintaining processes. It is one of those situations of turning around the whole psychology of surplus to a psychology of appreciating that there is probably going to be a shortage and that we have to attend to that, and then getting resources, both teacher education institutions vis-à-vis universities and universities vis-à-vis the government, that can address the personnel needs and retraining or new training kinds of needs.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I find it mind-boggling that we get ourselves to the stage of not being in advance, so that we are moving from surplus to deficit, especially with some boards that have already been identifying this as a problem now for a little while.

Do you have the information with you or can you get it for the committee on just how many teachers are coming out, graduating this last year, in those areas where we know there are deficits? I have heard, again anecdotally, that there are very, very few graduates coming out with math capacity to teach math at a secondary level this year from our schools. That is not something that has just happened overnight. Do you have those statistics? Surely that is a base of information that must be available, which can then be correlated with what the boards need, to be able to tell us just how severe the problem is going to be in math this year.

Ms. Smith: We are in the process of obtaining data to look at each of the areas. In a current survey being done of all the boards of education in Ontario, however, there is no indication from any of the boards that they cannot obtain the proper number of teachers in, say, math or science. The one area that boards have all claimed to have difficulty hiring in is the area of French, particularly with the growth of French immersion, mainly in urban areas but throughout the province to a lesser extent as well. That is the one area of pressure where boards are actually saying they are having great difficulty, but we are not hearing from boards, when they are asked to

put down on paper what their needs are in various teacher training areas, that they cannot hire math and science teachers—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Certificated teachers.

Ms. Smith: Certificated teachers.

Madam Chairman: I am sorry to interject, but we have only approximately five minutes left and I have five more questioners.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: There is just the one thing I wanted to know. If we could get that information province-wide, I suppose that would be great, but what is York's situation? Can you tell us how many graduates there are in these fields from York this year? You should know that.

Dr. Effrat: We would have that information.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: If you could send that to the committee, that would be useful.

Madam Chairman: Yes, we would very much appreciate that.

Ms. Smith: May I just say, too, that I am currently doing a study for the Ministry of Colleges and Universities and the Ministry of Education which is looking at the whole supply and demand situation for teachers in Ontario, and much of the information you are asking about will be included in that study.

Madam Chairman: We have Mr. Adams, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Reycraft, Mr. Villeneuve and Mrs. O'Neill. Perhaps we could keep the questions as short as possible. We do not want to inconvenience the presenters we have patiently waiting for the rest of the morning. If we keep the questions as short as possible, that would be appreciated.

Mr. Adams: With regard to teacher training, at the moment could you estimate roughly the proportions for preservice and in-service training for a typical teacher? Would most of it be preservice or in-service?

Ms. Smith: All teachers must complete preservice education, which is the foundation training. In Ontario you cannot teach without it except on a letter of permission and usually for limited periods of time, so it is a must for all teachers to become certificated.

In Ontario, each year there are about 25,000 teachers who take advantage of formal in-service additional qualification courses of the 100,000 or so teachers in Ontario, about 25,000 take advantage of formal additional in-service qualification courses. However, there are many other informal channels for professional development.

All boards have highly developed professional development.

Mr. Adams: Would you guess that a typical teacher catches up with the year that he or she has as preservice, in-service training at the moment? At the end of a career—let's say they retired at 55—would they end up with roughly another year of training, do you think, or less?

Ms. Smith: Oh, many teachers end up with much more than that.

Mr. Adams: But the average teacher?

Ms. Smith: The average teacher would end with approximately another year throughout his career at least, I would say, but there are many who do much more, maybe three, four or five years' training beyond. It is not untypical to pull out a teacher's file and see several years of training beyond.

Dr. Effrat: That would just be looking at the formal training, not noting all the work the federation and boards do in terms of more informal, elaborate—

Ms. Smith: That is also not counting graduate work, which many teachers do as well.

Mr. Adams: Yes, I meant teacher-training-related work. So with the preservice training, you have this careful selection process? How many people, once they have been accepted, drop out or fail during that year? Could you give me a rough percentage?

Dr. Effrat: It would be hard to, but it would be fairly small. I would think on the order of 10 per cent.

Ms. Smith: Some fail and some are counselled out by us. It is a mixture.

Mr. Adams: Or just decide not to go on. I did not necessarily mean drop out; they decide not to continue. Of those who graduate, how many decide not to teach?

Dr. Effrat: From our information, certainly our direct experience, it would be a very small number who would not go into teaching.

Mr. Adams: It seems to me a lot depends on your selection process. I would have guessed your answers, you see, and it seems to me that if you are picking them wrong, OK, that preservice training does not in fact filter them out. Once you have picked them, they go into the schools.

Dr. Effrat: There is a process where the school boards would be interviewing and selecting in the hiring process, and then before a person obtains a permanent contract there are a few years of successful teaching required.

Mr. Adams: Do you have some figures on that, on the people who are filtered at that stage; a percentage?

Dr. Effrat: No, we do not.

Mr. Adams: It would be interesting too, would it not, because your own selection process is reflected in those results, it seems to me. With regard to the actual preservice training now and the people who are giving the instruction, how recent is their contact with the schools, apart from contact through their students?

Dr. Effrat: My sense is that it is extremely recent. For example, in the case of our faculty, which is training a significant proportion of the teachers in the province, approximately a third of our full-time faculty are people who are on secondment from local school boards. They come to us for several years. They are leading professionals and so on, so their experience is very direct and current. Most of our full-time faculty would have teaching certificates, so they have a good professional background. I think that kind of background would be true of most of the other faculties in the province as well.

Mr. Adams: Are you both involved in teacher training?

Dr. Effrat: Yes.

Mr. Adams: Could I ask you how long your experience was in school, how many years have you have had and how many years you had in university?

Ms. Smith: I have been a teacher for 22 years in Ontario. I most recently took a year from the university and taught in a classroom eight years ago. I have been associated with the university since the early 1970s.

Mr. Adams: So the major part of your career has been university?

Ms. Smith: I was actually an unusual breed. I was one of those cross-appointments, and so until 1980 I was both with a university and a school board. I had a mixture.

Dr. Effrat: The major part of my career has been more with the university, and with the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education prior to that, but with a very close involvement with people in practice.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Adams. You kept your questions very brief, and I do notice there were a few more of them than I anticipated, so perhaps we will go on to Mr. Jackson.

Mr. Jackson: As you know, our committee is dealing with the goals and philosophies of

education, and this committee is going to quickly come to the conclusion of the significance and importance of the teacher, so it is going to be important for us to consider what recommendations for reforms we are going to make.

1050

It is clear from my perspective and my background that the situation in Ontario with respect to how we select teachers is poor. Like all MPPs, I get my share of students, graduates from my community, coming to me for advice and assistance in getting into a teachers' college or a faculty of education. Quite frankly, I am quite disturbed at the life opportunities that are denied many young people in this province. In fact, I would go so far as to say that entrance into teachers' colleges is a cross between a lottery and a crapshoot in this province. I think it is that bad.

I was fascinated by your comments about where you are moving towards. You were clear not to state you have achieved it. You were clear not to say that is what you are doing. You were stating it more in terms of its being an ideal and "We are moving towards it." But we have received only two deputations in the 10 we have received to date which make specific reference to changing the eligibility requirements and I would like to hear more from you.

We do it with doctors. We have started at McMaster University, where we are looking for a more holistic approach, to use your phrase. We hope some day we will be doing it in the legal profession for family law matters. It is badly needed in terms of the treatment of women in the courts.

As Jesse Jackson said in his recent speech—and it really struck a chord for this committee—we should be attracting teachers who will teach life and not be teaching just for a living. I think in Ontario we too have much to do, as does the United States. We are good on compensation, but we are poor in terms of selection.

Can you talk to us in more specific terms about things that should be done? I want to hear, if I can, why we are weighting marks. Why, for example, if you put York University as your third choice, can you not get into York with an 80 per cent average? That is why I refer to it as a crapshoot. I think it is a terrible thing we have put some tremendous young people in this province through who cannot get into teaching.

Ms. Smith: I am sure you, as well as many other MPPs, have had many complaints. There were 13,500 applicants to teacher education institutes in Ontario this spring for 3,500 spots, so the competition is tremendous.

When I talked about the serious underfunding of universities, there have been some gains made over the last two years which have certainly been passed along to us, but part of the problem is that they are very uncertain; it comes as a result of short-term-accessibility money. No university president is going to turn to us and say, "Yes, you are growing and you can have three tenure-stream appointments and these are going to be long-term people you can count on having with you for your teacher education endeavours," when that president does not know from one year to the next whether the money is still going to be there.

We do need to have the faculties of education and the teacher training institutes grow, obviously, and we do need to have better bases on which to plan.

Mr. Jackson: I am sorry, but even during periods of growth we were still not resolving the issue of a marks-based entry as opposed to aptitude and appropriate models.

Ms. Smith: I am going on to that point next. The other part of the problem, of course, is the actual selection and how it is done.

We think at York we have gone a long way this year and have had good results in trying to make some sort of impact. You may very well have somebody who says to you, "Yes, I had 80 per cent and I couldn't get into York University to the faculty of education." That may very well be true, because we do not go strictly on marks. In the holistic assessment of a person, the person with 80 per cent who has absolutely none of what you call "chalkboard manner" may not make a good teacher. We want to look at the full picture of the person. That is, what did they do in their academic grades? What have they done in the rest of their lives? Have they shown an interest in children and young people up to the point of being 25 years of age?

Mr. Jackson: I am sorry to interrupt you. I misled you if I implied that the person with the 80 per cent should have gotten in. I was talking about this terrible lottery system. The university you put as your first choice is given tremendous weight in this province. I am sorry I misled you with the 80 per cent.

I have a case of a young lady in my riding who had developed one of the most advanced programs for children who have been sexually abused. She was a teacher's aide for a year and a half and she had letters from psychologists saying her work was outstanding in this field, but she could not get into a faculty of education because she put down the wrong university.

Ms. Smith: You had better send her to us.

Mr. Jackson: I went to the university, I was so convinced of the wrongness of what was happening to this young lady. Her marks were poor because she had to help her mother through her last two years of cancer before she died. I could not get a university to listen to this case, so I am sorry—

Ms. Smith: Did the young lady come to York University?

Mr. Jackson: No. She did not have York as one of her three. You would not have even talked to her at that point. All I am saying is I want to hear how we are going to change a system which, in my view, tends to be discriminatory to achieving a goal to the very best teachers. I will stop there.

Ms. Smith: We think we have gone a long way, as I say, to already implementing this year a system which looks at grades, previous experience, the person's written skills and the person's success in an interview with people. We use several measures to assess the candidates and we use a combination. It does not mean that somebody who is outstanding in every other way but has a C average could not get in with us. The sort of candidate you are describing would probably be a very attractive candidate for us for a variety of reasons. We do look at people's life circumstances—the oldest child who helps support a widowed mother and those kinds of things—as part of looking at a person's background and suitability for teaching.

We cannot speak, obviously, for every other faculty of education, but once one large university has begun to implement that kind of system, it obviously brings pressure to bear on others if it is successful and can be held up as a model. We hope that it will make a contribution throughout the province in time.

Dr. Effrat: If I could just briefly add that I will be pleased to convey the concerns to my fellow deans. There is one point of further reassurance: one of the recommendations that has come out of the deliberations around the teacher education review commission is that there be greater attention given to the whole person and more involvement of the profession in the selection process. I think that is something we can look for further movement on.

There was one small note that I am not sure was intended, the suggestion that many of the people in the teaching profession now are there because they are doing it for a living rather than out of a deep commitment or conviction. I do not

think that was really intended. Certainly, I would want to defend the kind of commitment and the quality of the people in the teaching profession. I think we can be very proud of their motivation.

Mr. Jackson: If you are seeking an interpretation of what I was thinking, I will tell you, having spent nine years negotiating teachers' contracts in this province, that we have all types teaching. I will tell you that for the good teacher there is not enough money in the world to pay the very best teachers, but we do not have all of our teachers teaching at that level. Nobody in this province is going to lay claim to that.

There is a balance in that, and I was expressing that as a balanced position. We do have fairly well paid teachers in this province, versus the statement that Jesse Jackson was making based on the deplorable salary bases for teachers in the United States. That was basically the point I was putting in perspective.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. We will go on to Mr. Reyecraft, then Mr. Villeneuve and Mrs. O'Neill. Since we are already almost 15 minutes behind and the Ontario Federation of Labour is very patiently waiting to make its presentation, perhaps we could strive to make the questions short.

Mr. Reyecraft: I will do my best. I heard your admonition that we not recommend a shift in focus away from people who are involved in building cathedrals to those who are just involved in stone cutting, but the reality is that there is a certain amount of pressure in our society now to do that. It comes as a result of reports that we have received about drop-out rates, illiteracy rates, poor performance on entrance exams to colleges and universities and reports that we have received here at this committee from employers or employers' representatives who are concerned about the ability of applicants to fill out forms, read manuals and so on.

There is a school of thought that exists that says the standards in the system have dropped too low and that the system is currently failing society. You suggested, in reviewing all that, that we make sure we looked at comparative data that was fair and that we not make unfair comparisons. But you stopped short of saying whether you agreed or disagreed with those allegations that the system is not meeting the needs of society of Ontario in 1988. Could you expand a bit and comment on that?

1100

Dr. Effrat: I think we would obviously agree that there is room for continued improvement and

evolution, but we would want to do that from a feeling of pride and strength as we move forward in that positive framework. What the schools and teachers have been able to accomplish with a much more diverse population of students under much more extenuating kinds of circumstances is something that we can feel has been a very positive accomplishment.

Rather than feeling that standards are lower or those things, all the systematic studies that have compared achievement standards over time indicate there has not been a decline in the overall average achievement of students in Ontario at the same time as the population within schools has become much more extensive, much more diverse in background, much more multicultural and so on. I think in one sense we can take that as a sign of some significant accomplishment to date, recognizing there are still sectors that we need to work even harder to meet the needs of.

Mr. Reycraft: On the crossroads that you spoke of at the beginning of your presentation, are you referring to a need to change the focus of the system or is it the pressure to do that that represents the crossroads in reality?

Dr. Effrat: It would be a combination of things, but it is certainly pointing to this being a juncture historically because I think the kind of pressures from a number of different sources of philosophical viewpoint and concern are at a point of heightened concern and awareness. In that sense, I think there are a lot of choices that are likely to be made in the near future; choices around, for example, the kind of teachers we want to have, given the likely turnover, choices around allocation of scarce resources, choices of how we are going to balance out the pressures for further development of skills, technology and so on while we maintain a basically humanistic and holistic framework. Those would be some of the concerns.

Mr. Reycraft: I would like to explore some of those teacher education issues, too, but I will perhaps get an opportunity at another time to do that.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. I appreciate that you did keep your questions short to allow for more time for the answers.

Mr. Villeneuve: I was pleased to notice that you touched on the Ontario student assistant program as a possible area where you could improve. Do I gather, from what you have stated here, that you have a kind of standard-type mould where basically all of your potential teachers are coming from upper-middle-class professional

families? I like the idea of drawing from more nontraditional students and backgrounds. Could you just expand on that a little? What are you finding now and where is the area that you want to draw from?

Dr. Effrat: I think the concern we particularly wanted to point to in regard to the OSAP question is that the funding, the support that is available for students to continue their education, presents constraints. The funding that is available to universities to use for scholarships and so on presents a whole series of constraints, if we are to maintain or enrich the diversity of students going into higher education or into various professions, especially teaching, given the kind of role models that teachers can present, if we are to draw on and make available opportunities for students from more financially disadvantaged and multicultural backgrounds, immigrant groups and so on.

One area we hope would be looked at more closely is the funding that is available to universities and to students, whether they be loans, scholarships or whatever. I guess it was as recently as the 1960s that teachers' college was free. I know a lot of people would not have gone into teaching unless that was the case, and I think they have made a tremendous contribution, not only for their own mobility but as models for children from those kinds of financial backgrounds, other ethnic group backgrounds and so on. I think, given the kinds of costs associated with higher education, costs to families and so on, unless there is some serious attention given to this area, we are in the position of increasing a hurdle at precisely the time when we should be lowering it.

Mr. Villeneuve: I think you are right. Diversification of backgrounds would strengthen the profession in its entirety.

On a totally different matter, I think I read in your brief here that you would like more monitoring of the quality of education as you compare different institutions, one to the other. Where do you feel this monitoring should be? How would you see it applied in the most effective fashion?

Dr. Effrat: The proposal that the faculties have made—and I think that is in close co-operation with federations, board representatives and so on—is that there be the establishment of some sort of overarching, a provincial advisory committee or an Ontario council on teacher education, that would have a kind of mandate to monitor programs, to look at programs, to encourage improvement in programs, things of

that sort, and that this be a collaborative and combined effort of the major players in the field, including not only the universities but professionals and school boards as well.

That would probably be the main arena for that to occur, as well as concern about monitoring of offshore graduate programs in the same way that the Ontario graduate programs are monitored. That again involves a close scrutiny by the universities themselves in the province.

Mr. Adams: You have raised the advisory council. I wonder if in your vision of this advisory council, you have considered having students and parents on it?

Dr. Effrat: It is an interesting idea. The student dimension—

Mr. Adams: You have to say yes or no, I am afraid.

Interjection: How about yes and no?

Madam Chairman: No, I am sorry, that is three words. How about maybe?

Dr. Effrat: We will take that under consideration.

Mrs. O'Neill: I would like to thank Dr. Effrat and Ms. Smith for coming before us, because I think in doing that you knew there would be a level of accountability about your programs as well as presenting ideas to us to consider.

On page 4, you talk about better reflection of communities they serve. I had to go actually to the national level relating to the disabled to have it finally brought to my attention that if you go into a school, even a school strictly for disabled students, there is often not one disabled teacher in that school. I wonder what you have done to bring that kind of reflection of the community into your program. Is everything accessible? Have you encouraged students who are blind or profoundly deaf or those who are physically disabled in other ways to come into your faculty?

Dr. Effrat: In our case that I am aware of, yes. That would be true both in terms of physical provisions as well as the kind of support that would be needed to facilitate the involvement of people from that background.

Mrs. O'Neill: So you have had students who have graduated successfully and are now teaching in Ontario schools?

Dr. Effrat: That is my knowledge, yes, and the hearing-impaired.

Mrs. O'Neill: The other area I wanted you to say a little about if you could is this confusion that you bring to us about graduate programs. Is it true that we do not have any graduate programs in

education? That certainly was not my understanding, but that is what I am reading from page 6.

Ms. Smith: No. We have graduate education in Ontario, some very good graduate education, but there are some faculties that have a small amount of graduate education, perhaps in one narrow area, and would like to broaden the scope of studies in graduate education in parts of the province to make it accessible to teachers throughout the province. That does not seem possible at this time.

Teachers, when they cannot go to their local institution, will overflow to whatever other accessible institution is available. We have many instances of foreign universities in Ontario offering courses without library resources and without the kind of support system—

Mrs. O'Neill: Would those be correspondence courses?

Ms. Smith: There are, I believe, in some cases, but universities from across the border and from other provinces actually come and rent properties in Ontario. There are many outside universities in the Metropolitan Toronto area, for example, especially—

Mrs. O'Neill: Is this an administrative problem or a funding problem that we cannot provide—

1110

Dr. Effrat: It would seem to be a combination.

One concern comes back to, I think it was Mr. Jackson's point. There is concern in the profession and in some universities that there is an excessive emphasis on grades for admission to graduate programs as well without attention to professional accomplishments and the importance of those factors. That is certainly one serious concern, as well as the resources available and authorization.

Mrs. O'Neill: One final comment. At the bottom of page 4, you talk about a general induction program for all new teachers. Are you suggesting that would be across all faculties of education in the province and that at the present time it is not?

Ms. Smith: Yes.

Mrs. O'Neill: There is not such a program?

Ms. Smith: In fairness, boards—and some boards do it better than others—generally have some sort of induction or orientation for their new teachers. Some of them have really very highly developed programs which are very good.

All the faculties of education would like very much to have a common induction period which they are involved in helping to deliver, along with boards of education, to ensure that new teachers have a good support system when they first enter the classroom; support not just by way of information but perhaps by a mentoring system where a senior teacher is paired with a new teacher. There are many ideas, but it would be across the province.

Mrs. O'Neill: The concept here is sort of onsite. You would have a mobile unit, so to speak, to go to various boards or at least centres of boards, the regional offices or something like that.

Ms. Smith: Or some kind of means.

Mrs. O'Neill: This is somewhat connected to the teacher review recommendations, is it not?

Dr. Effrat: Yes.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Dean Effrat and Professor Smith. We have really found your presentation valuable today. We have not been concentrating on the post-secondary avenues. To date, most of our presenters have been looking at the elementary and secondary levels, so it was particularly valuable. Thank you for coming today.

Now we have the patient and long-suffering Ontario Federation of Labour, which was supposed to start about 25 minutes ago, so we apologize for the delay. Mr. Turk, I believe.

Mr. Turk: That is right.

Madam Chairman: Thank you for coming today. Obviously, it is not only important to look at the system itself, but at the other end of the system, what it is going to be used for and how the users of the system, the students, are going to fit into the work world afterwards. We are looking with eager anticipation towards your brief.

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF LABOUR

Mr. Turk: My name is Jim Turk. I am director of education for the Ontario Federation of Labour.

We appreciate the opportunity to appear before this committee at this stage on behalf of the 800,000 workers whom we represent. We hope to be able to return in September to address much more specific programmatic suggestions. Our understanding is that at this stage you are looking at broader issues of goals and philosophy of education and that is what we are addressing in this presentation. As I say, we hope to be able to come back at your next stage and deal much more

concretely with how to put some of these into practice.

Education in Canada and the United States and, in fact, in most of the western world had always been the preserve of a small élite until the advent of mass education in the 19th century, which really saw a fundamental redefinition of the goal of education. Largely divorced from a tie to high culture and academic learning, public education then, as we will argue now, was supported largely on the basis that it would help prepare masses of people to be dutiful citizens and employees.

In a statement written by the Winnipeg Board of Education in 1913, we found a nice summary of this position. I will just quote that, if I may.

"Until a comparatively recent period, the schools were organized on purely academic lines and the avowed aim of education was culture and discipline. This aim has, however, been greatly enlarged within the past few years by including within its scope the development of a sense of social and civic duty, the stimulation of national and patriotic spirit, the promotion of public health and the direct preparations for the occupations of life."

Professor Ken Osborne in a forthcoming book has nicely summarized this emphasis as an emphasis on loyalty, obedience and conformity.

A comment by a high school student also nicely illustrates this point. This is not from 1913 but from 1985:

"You can't put up your hand and say, 'Sir, this lesson's very boring.' You just aren't allowed to do that in school. If you feel it's boring, you think there is something wrong with you; you get worried because everybody else is writing things down. Everybody is telling you what's best for you and what ain't, but you're never taught to question anything. You're taught to think like that. If you do question anything, there's something wrong with you. You're insolent, you're naughty, you're a thug."

While the goals of education, as currently set out by the Ontario Ministry of Education, bear little resemblance to the explicit demand for conformity to dominant values and practices in society and in the workplace, the education system operates in a manner as if these 19th-century goals were still in place. This historic understanding of education lies behind complaints demanding that schools produce even more conformity to the status quo.

Canada, like the most of the western world, has entered an extended period of economic crisis since the early 1970s, resulting in growing

pressures on the education system. I suspect the reason that this committee was set up is a reflection of a lot of questioning of that system and pressure to re-evaluate what its goals are.

The dramatic shifts in the world of work—the decline of manufacturing; the growth of office, professional and managerial jobs; the enormous increase of women in the workforce, primarily in the low-paid sectors; the growth of unemployment, particularly for the young; intensified regional inequality; and the growing dependence of the Canadian economy on the United States—have caused significant social changes and made an impact on our schools.

In this context, there are those who want the education system to be primarily a source of stability at the expense of a deeper commitment to a critical and substantial curriculum. I suspect you will hear a number of people appear before you who make that sort of argument, although they certainly will not phrase it in that terminology.

It is important that the select committee distance itself from the immediate social pressures that have forced the education system into the limelight so that the committee can deal with the fundamental question: What do we want our educational system to do? Only then can we determine which, if any, of the current critics are justified, and only then can we intelligently discuss plans of what actually to do.

We in the Ontario Federation of Labour are clear about our goals for the education system. Those goals are not narrow. For us, the principal goals are to equip everyone with the basic ability to acquire information, to reason clearly, to think critically, to communicate one's ideas effectively and to try to put one's ideas and knowledge into practice.

These are not inconsistent with the current goals of education as enunciated by the Ontario Ministry of Education. In fact, the ministry's statement of goals is quite a good one, we think, but they are a far cry from what is actually happening in the school system.

To understand this disparity, it is necessary to go beyond the stated goals to the conceptions that lie behind those goals. For the purposes of this discussion, we identify six foci that animate our conception of the goals for education.

While our goals are compatible with the ministry's stated goals, both are contrary to the system's apparently real goal of fostering loyalty, obedience and conformity. Only in programs for the élite is one likely to find some emphasis on critical thinking and expression, though it has

its limitations even in these programs. We feel everyone needs a critical education and we feel it is time to end the class-based discrimination that restricts good education to an élite.

The discrimination starts in the preschool years. Before children are allowed to enter school, working-class children are often put at a disadvantage because they are denied access to high-quality child care. Because of a shortage of affordable spaces in good child care centres, workers' children are often forced into arrangements where they receive custodial services, with little or no educational experience.

When they enter elementary school, almost all children are quickly put into homogeneous ability groupings, allegedly for their own good. But extensive research in Canada and the United States makes clear that ability grouping sorts more by social class than by any measure of intellectual ability or aptitude. There is no clear indication that ability grouping achieves any worthwhile educational goal.

The ability grouping of elementary school turns into formal streams in secondary school, with working-class children forming almost the entirety of the two bottom streams. What children learn in the advanced stream is quite different from what they learn in the general or basic streams.

The inequality culminates in post-secondary education, where the children of high-status parents constitute the overwhelming majority of university students and a disproportionate percentage of college students.

Unless one holds the untenable view that working-class children are less bright than their more affluent counterparts, this pattern of inequality shows that something is desperately wrong with our educational system.

Also concomitant with our goals is a rejection of the notion that education should be narrowed to training for a job. As the economic crisis continues into its second decade, employers and governments are increasingly putting pressure on the educational system to become more explicitly a producer of willing and able workers.

1120

We are repeatedly told that our ability to compete, our economic future, depends on building a closer link between business and the education system, making sure that students have the skills and attitudes to fit the employers' current needs for workers.

While we want our children to be able to get jobs, we feel it is a large jump to the position that training is synonymous with education. In our

view, there is already too close a link between business and the schools. Employers' views of the world infuse too much of the curriculum from kindergarten to university.

The irony is that in the current era of rapid social change, one's ability to think creatively and critically will be more important than ever, a point that corporate human resource managers love to make when they speak on education. What they fail to say is that they want these skills as long as they are applied only to what the employer sanctions.

Just as in school, so in the workplace, for all but those at the top, loyalty, obedience and conformity are what is demanded. The trade union leadership is full of bright, creative, critical thinkers who had trouble in school and in the workplace precisely because they did not restrict their critical and creative skills to what the school officials and employers deemed appropriate.

Closer ties to business will inject even more restriction on genuine intellectual endeavour. What our society needs is a broadening of creative intellectual work to all students, not a reduction of education to job training. Hopefully, we can build a society in which economic advancement will be related to a more broadly and critically educated population, not to a more narrowly trained workforce.

The issue of the linkage between theory and practice is vital to all we have discussed so far. The prevailing educational approach is to separate theory and practice. The Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions document explicitly reserves theory to those in the advanced stream. An emphasis on practice is prescribed for the rest.

We reject the distinction. There is no knowledge without theory and there is no knowledge without practice. Pretending the two can be separated is not only bad educational philosophy, it also serves as an underpinning for a two-tier educational system: theory for the best and practice for the rest.

The dichotomy also serves to mask the ideology that lies behind the supposedly pure practice. When working-class kids in the lower streams are told the values of a practical education, and often put into work situations, the ideology which guides the practices to which they are exposed is deliberately hidden from them. "This is the way things are" is the refrain. They are neither required nor encouraged to examine the situations in which they find themselves in a critical or evaluative manner.

They are just supposed to learn about the facts of life.

Uncritical and unquestioning practice is certainly not education; yet it is the fate of a large portion of our children in school. The kind of education we advocate has another requirement, the recognition that no education can be value-free or unbiased. The attempt to portray education as neutral or free of values is an attempt to mislead.

Every question asked implies others not asked. Every way of formulating a question leads more easily to some answers than others. Every fact is only one among many. Bias is inescapably a product of whatever a teacher does or does not do, whatever a textbook covers or does not cover, whatever a curriculum guideline recommends or fails to recommend.

Let's take an example. One can study racism as an academic exercise. One can also focus a lesson on the need to eliminate racism and explore ways to do so, or one can argue that the topic of racism has no room in the curriculum. Each is a biased decision. Each is a political choice. Each has educational, philosophical and moral consequences.

No aspect of education avoids this issue. It is a thoroughly biased decision for an English teacher, for example, to discuss the minutiae of Shakespeare's plays but find no time to talk about the fundamental inequality in Shakespeare's England and its implications for contemporary Anglo-Canadian society.

Equally biased is a kindergarten or first-grade program that finds no time to introduce children to the diversity of work and workers in their own community.

While the list could go on and on, the point is simple. Good education does not mean rooting out of bias—an impossibility in any case—but rather making the teacher's and the program's biases explicit so they can be the subject of critical examination and questioning and be an integral part of the learning process.

Learning how to think and learning how to learn for oneself require the kind of critical reflection that is destroyed by the mystification of valueless learning. What separates indoctrination from education is not the presence of bias in the teacher but the openness of the curriculum to critical thought and the attempt to pursue inquiry rigorously and fairly.

Education, in our view, is a lifelong process. It does not begin nor end in school. Yet schooling is an indispensable phase of learning. Given the enormous resources that our province puts into

the school system, we have every right to expect that system to play a significant role for everyone.

Children bring a diversity of backgrounds and experiences to kindergarten. When children leave school, we have every right to expect that they have gotten something tangible.

It is not acceptable to say we have provided all children with an equal opportunity to learn, for we have not. Those kids who are put in the lower streams in first grade are likely to stay there until they leave school. Despite everyone's best intentions, they had no equality of opportunity.

Nor has there been equality of opportunity for girls and women in our educational system. They continue to be underrepresented in a number of programs.

And it does not do to blame these failures on parents or on cultural backgrounds.

Of course, some kids come to school better prepared than others. But the whole point of the universal educational system that absorbs so much of the province's total budget is to equalize those differences.

There must be an equality of results, not of opportunity. Saying that does not mean a lockstep education through which everyone is forced. But it does mean recognition that there are skills and information that every person needs to function at home, in the community and at work.

It is our obligation to identify what these are and to pursue, to the best of our ability, the goal of making sure that everyone has these by the time they leave full-time schooling.

Finally, we feel it is necessary to point out what follows from most of the preceding. Education is always a collective undertaking. We learn from each other, and no learning event occurs except as a result of a collective effort of teacher and student, of writer and reader, of scholar and colleagues, etc.

Yet, we persist in structuring much of our schooling based on a notion of individualistic learning, often fostered through competition.

Were we to explicitly recognize the collective character of learning, we would find it much easier to plan teaching strategies that include everyone, that foster the notion that everyone has something to contribute to each task, and that create a climate of mutual support and help that would assist the fuller education of all learners.

Our vision of the educational system is a challenging one. Not only do we feel it can be put into practice but also we feel it must be.

We have avoided making programmatic suggestions in this presentation since that is reserved for later hearings. Suffice it to note that all the necessary elements to implement our approach to education are known and practised in one place or another.

The challenge, in our view, that faces this committee and all of us, is to have the courage to accept appropriate goals for our educational system. Once we have done this, we can turn to the equally challenging task of implementing those goals.

While this discussion may seem to many to be unnecessarily philosophical, it is wholly practical, as well. The wellbeing of ourselves, our children and our society depends on how we resolve these issues.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Turk. I must congratulate you on a very succinct and well-thought-out presentation. You have stated that one of your principal goals is to communicate one's ideas effectively, and I can certainly say you have done that this morning, so thank you.

Mr. Turk: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: We have Mr. Adams first on the list.

Mr. Adams: Mr. Turk, I do not know if this quotation of yours "loyalty, obedience and conformity," is a deliberate parody. There is a nation whose motto is, "loyalty, obedience, discipline."

Mr. Turk: I do not believe it is a deliberate parody, but I do not know what was in Professor Osborne's mind. I have only seen a draft of his forthcoming book.

Mr. Adams: I would like to say to begin, I do not like some of the rhetoric in your presentation. For example, I do not like the use of the expression "working class." But I agree entirely with your basic premise which is, I think, that despite the enormous expansion of the school system, the college, the university system, the children of families which are in various ways poor, deprived, the children of people who are—to borrow a statement as you would say—of uneducated parents still are not coming through. It is an extraordinary thing. If you look at the last 25 years and what we have done, as you said, the objectives are fine. If you read them, it looks good, but something is going wrong in there.

I know you are coming back in September, but in practical terms administratively, are there not some things we can do? For example, can you imagine us producing staffing ratios for schools,

which by some measures have a high proportion of such children, assuming we improve the student-teacher ratio there?

1130

Mr. Turk: The difficulty in answering your question succinctly is that I think the kinds of changes that need to be made are substantial and do not lend themselves to a little tinkering here and a little tinkering there to fine-tune the system. I think there has to be a major overhaul of it, and that has a number of elements. One element is class size. Teachers are being expected to teach unrealistically large numbers of children in order to meet the needs of the diversity of kids that they have.

Mr. Adams: But could we take the last, though? If we could find some measure for schools which need small class sizes, instead of saying reduce them all, could we not just do it for some? How would you like to identify these schools? That is what I am trying to get at.

Mr. Turk: I am not sure that is the approach to deal with it. There have been a number of attempts to solve the problems that way but they have not worked all that well, in our view. It goes back to the heart of some of the problems we see, that we address here and that we will certainly talk more completely about it in September if we are able to come back: the streaming of kids or the separation of kids.

One of things we have to look at is, how do we teach in a nonstreamed fashion? Most of the training the teachers get is teaching strategies and techniques that are dependent on creating homogeneous ability groupings in the elementary years. In fact, the legislation in Ontario requires the streaming at the secondary level. What are nonstreamed approaches to education, where you bring a diversity of kids with a diversity of skills into a classroom? I am not sure it is saying, "Well, let's identify the schools that have poorer kids, more children of workers, or more children of parents with less education and deal with their special problems."

Mr. Adams: You have heard the presentation before from—

Mr. Turk: No. I just heard the questioning.

Mr. Adams: We just had some people here who were representing the teacher-training end of things. That is a standard way of cutting into the system very quickly because, as you know, in the system you have people teaching for 30 and 40 years or whatever it is. Unless you can cut into that cycle, you wait decades for a change to occur. Now, teacher training is one way you can

cut into it, both, as they call it, "preservice teacher training" and then training inservice.

Can you think of ways we can sensitize the current crop of teachers to this problem? Is there not some way we could tackle it? For example, they could hear your brief but, of course, it is rather intellectual and so on. How do we get at the teacher who is a product of the system that you are criticizing, who is like us—I was going to use the word "middle class" but I am not supposed to use that either, you know what I mean—people who have been successful—

Mr. Turk: If you are using "middle class" why shouldn't I be using "working class"?

Mr. Adams: How do we get at that crop of teachers? Are there some ways we could sensitize teachers to this and then change it very quickly.

Mr. Turk: I find a lot of teachers are sensitized to these problems. I speak about these matters quite frequently to groups of teachers. I spoke on a professional development day a few months ago to all secondary school teachers in the Windsor area and spoke about streaming and the problems that we are having. I was expecting quite a hostile reaction and got some hostility but, in fact, had a number of teachers who are in the vocational schools, the lower-stream schools, saying: "You are absolutely right that 85 per cent of our kids drop out. We are not sure what kind of education they are getting. We are trying hard from our resource."

Certainly, a big component of the change has to do with how we teach teachers and how we provide support for them as we go along. If we say that part of the problem is streaming, as we do, what are nonstreamed teaching approaches? Most teachers have not had the opportunity to explore those kinds of questions, and dealing with that is a big part of the solution, but only a part.

Mr. Adams: I have heard that there are teachers who opt to teach the students whom you and I are concerned about. OK; but I have also heard that they often do not get promoted as a result. Have you heard that? They are in these streams which are sort of unfashionable streams and as a result they do not get the recognition they would get if they were in some others. I hate to have to be so practical when your presentation is so philosophical.

Can I take one more point? OK. Have you given any thought to the fact that in this province—and I think it is unique—one cannot finish high school in college?

Mr. Turk: I am sorry.

Mr. Adams: You cannot finish high school in community college in Ontario.

Mr. Turk: Yes.

Mr. Adams: Have you given any thought to the implications of that for a student, for example, who goes to college in grade 11 or grade 12 and in fact then obtains a college diploma of some sort but in that process cannot finish high school?

Mr. Turk: We have serious problems with linkage between our various educational systems from high school to college, from college to university. It is part of the streaming. The notion is that certain kinds of kids should go to community college and certain kinds should go to universities. A kid who goes through a general-level stream, makes it into a community college and does very well cannot get any credit at the university level either for the work he has done in a community college. He has got to start back at scratch, which is a real disincentive, especially to a kid from a family without much money, to have to start over again, so he does not go. I think you are pointing to a linkage problem, which I hope your committee looks at, at all levels.

Mr. Adams: I have been told that is a union problem.

Mr. Turk: A union problem?

Mr. Adams: That it has to do with high school teachers and their concern that high school curriculum not be taught in college.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: It has to do with what is taught in college. It is not—

Mr. Adams: It seems to be unusual. At other community colleges in the country you can finish high school in college; in fact, in Ontario you cannot.

Mr. Turk: I do not know the origin of the problem, but I am not aware that teachers have such influence over educational policy in this province.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Just to clear it up, you cannot get your high school diploma going through the college, because it is a much more condensed teaching system, but you can get equivalency to get yourself to move on through the college system. What you do not end up with is your high school diploma.

Mr. Jackson: You do not get your secondary school graduation diploma.

Mr. Adams: I do understand that, but I think that piece of paper is very significant. Very

often, it is the most generalized statement of your educational experience.

Mr. Turk: OK, but I would hope that out of your question the larger issue your committee looks at is this whole issue of the linkage between various educational institutions. I think we have serious problems of a discontinuity between a variety of educational institutions.

Mr. Adams: I think those linkages affect these kids a lot. We have discussed them before, and I think it is particularly important for this group you are talking about.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I obviously enjoyed the thrust of this and I have had the opportunity to talk with Mr. Turk before about his ideas on education and then to notice a major change in the Ontario Federation of Labour. For those of you who are not particularly involved with labour kinds of issues, you should know that in the past labour's orientation on education has been very much to the training of its own membership within the unions and that kind of thing and not so much to concentrating on the qualities of our education system and how the children of unionized families are being served or not being served by the system. I think Mr. Turk in particular deserves a lot of credit for changing around some of that emphasis at the federation of labour and I look forward to his future participation as we get into some of the nitty-gritty.

I guess the thing that strikes me about what you say in your presentation is that maybe our difficulty is there is a group of explicit goals which are enunciated and with which nobody is having any particular difficulty, in terms of the 13 goals enunciated by the ministry, but that in fact these are not the real goals of our education system. If you think of goals and the reality of what is taking place, there are a number of implicit goals which are not expressed but with which perhaps we do have some fundamental disagreement or in fact we maybe have a fundamental agreement on and perhaps this committee should be trying to come to grips with that issue.

Is the issue one of providing this kind of stimulation, which seems to be raising the self-actualization of all individuals so that they will all be able to benefit in society, or is it in fact one of maintaining the status quo, of maintaining a certain level of noncritical thinking throughout our education for the purposes that were enunciated in the first couple of quotes you used in your paper?

I wonder if you can comment on that, as to whether or not in fact that is where we should be

focusing, whether or not we need to be adding to our goals some sort of notion of critical thought as crucial—all of this, which does not get enunciated specifically as a term within the 13 goals that are presented by the ministry—and whether or not, if we could come up with some re-evaluation of the goals, we need to have some measurement put forward as well as to how you can determine whether these goals are actually being attained when you look at what has happened in Ontario in past generations, especially to working-class kids?

1140

Mr. Turk: I think the problem in any organization is always the disparity between goals and what actually gets done. The educational system certainly is not unique in that regard. The fact that we have little problems with the goals I think is reflected—and we spent about a paragraph or two in the entire brief commenting on goals explicitly and then wanted to look beyond that to some organizing foci for our discussion.

I would certainly encourage you to do the same, although I suspect you are going to be hearing from a variety of people. I have not been following who has appeared before you so far, but I suspect, if you have not already, you are going to be hearing from a variety of people who in fact challenge the goals as currently enunciated by the ministry and really feel the need to bring education closer, to make it more into training, who really reject the broader goals that we were enunciating that, I think, are implicit and certainly to some extent explicit in the current goals.

You will be having a discussion of goals. I hope we do not backtrack in Ontario to a more 19th-century notion of the statement of goals. I guess we are reasonably confident you are going to do that. But then what we have to do is to get the practices in line with the goals. I think that is the task that is before you, and that is why I think some of what we see to be the more over-arching, more philosophical or general problems is what we are addressing here, how to deal with them. The real issue is how we deal with these.

Mr. Adams apologized for asking concrete questions when it was such a philosophical brief, but ultimately it is a whole bunch of concrete issues that are going to make the difference. It is not the problem of the goals; it is the problem of what the practice is. Why the practice is that way is a very complex matter.

I guess, if I may, I would just like to thank you for your opening comments, but modify them a

bit. In fact, we are not here appearing just on behalf—and I do not think you meant to imply that—of children of unionized families. Part of our interest in the broader issue of education is also that the labour movement in Ontario is about the only organization that can speak more generally on behalf of the concerns of, as we call them, working-class kids, whether their parents be employed or unemployed, union members or not. We are trying to express those in our presentation.

Mr. Jackson: We have been told that the New Democratic Party speaks for them, but I am delighted to hear that you now speak for them, instead of the NDP.

Mr. Turk: Maybe we speak with the same voice.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I guess the thing that I would want to focus on and not get into a debate on at the moment—it may be part of my own personal paranoia—is whether or not we are dealing with the difficulty of bringing into practice certain kinds of stated goals or whether or not there are other implicit goals which we are not listing which are in fact the agenda of the education system.

It seems to me that in many levels of education you have a conflict, for instance, in pedagogical terms, between people who believe that teaching is the passing on of all past information and others who believe that it is getting kids to deal with ideas, and never the twain shall meet. There are two groups that fight that out at all times; when we look at why the system has failed poor kids from time immemorial, even though these kinds of goals have been established now for 30 or 40 years, we wonder whether in fact that has been just a failure to put into practice or whether it has much more to do with power and the power relationships as they then show themselves in education, and there is not in fact another implicit set of goals here.

Mr. Turk: What we are trying to say is precisely that we feel a lot of those 19th-century goals, which do not appear here—to some extent their antithesis appears in the list of the goals by the province—are in fact what is guiding practice. To some large extent, I think a lot of the criticism the education system is currently getting is that it is not living up to those 19th-century goals sufficiently.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Yes.

Mr. Turk: We do not think those 19th-century goals are particularly good, either for working-class kids or for any kids. It is not only

the working-class kids who lose because they do not get a critical education; any kid who does not get a critical education loses, and so does the larger society. I think that quotation from the high school student at the beginning of our presentation rings true. It rings true to my educational experience. We have been in that situation quite frequently. We have to find a way so that that is not the classroom experience of people.

Mr. Mahoney: I will try to be brief. I was going to say that the statement by the student in 1985 was certainly true in 1960 and 1965 and has been true for a long time. In fact, in many ways, it is a life statement. People who have come out of the system are afraid to question things in life and in their work. There are many times, I am sure everyone here would agree, when we sit around committees and want to say they are awfully boring and question what we are here for, but not this one and certainly not this morning.

Also, as someone who grew up in the labour movement, I am a little bit astounded at some of your statements because it is clearly a very radical shift from the philosophy of labour 20 and 25 years ago.

However, there are a couple of things I find contradictory and I wonder if you could just help me with them. The essence I took out of your presentation was, "Don't train for jobs; train for life," and the question would be, what is life without a job and at what point in the education system—that word "stream" comes up all the time—do we say to a child, "OK, we have taught you to think, we have taught you to ask questions, we have taught you to probe, and now we want to teach you to do something"?

If we accept your basic philosophy and your basic goal of creating thinkers and philosophers and questioners and intellectuals, are we running the danger of running out of the people whom I frankly would have thought you would be interested in talking about, and that is the potential for plumbers, electricians and workers?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Thinking plumbers.

Mr. Mahoney: There is no question. What I am saying is at what point in the system do you say, "Now we have to start training people to do things," because we hear people saying to us, "We are getting kids graduating from school who can't do anything"?

Mr. Turk: First of all, we start with the premise that everyone, regardless of what his job is, should be equipped to think critically, to question, to have a broad range of interests in life

and the ability to pursue those interests, whether he is a plumber, a university professor or whatever.

Second, we have a very serious concern with people being able to get jobs. It is working-class youth who probably have the highest rate of unemployment of any identifiable group in our population, so it is our kids who are having problems getting jobs. There is nothing here that is saying we are not interested in people learning how to get jobs.

The question is, how do you prepare people for the world of work? When we listen to employers, we hear very contradictory things. On the one hand, when I go around and speak or speak on panels with employers, most employers I hear speaking, usually human resource managers, make statements about the goals of education that are not incompatible with this. They say: "We want people who can think, who can be creative, who can approach the task they are given creatively. We can train them for specific jobs, but we want people who have the skills to be able to adapt to a changing workplace."

Mr. Mahoney: Then why are the employers not hiring them on that basis? You hear kids come back and say, "I am caught in that circle where I can't get a job because I do not have experience and I can't get experience because I can't get a job."

Mr. Turk: First of all, we ask a similar question, "Why then, in practice in your workplace, do you not reward those kinds of things?" They say, "Oh, we do, we do," but it is certainly not our experience that in fact they do. It is our experience, certainly for a lot of workers in manufacturing or semi-skilled and unskilled jobs, that they basically want someone who will do what he is told, and as they often say, "Don't do it well; do it right."

That is a contradiction and I cannot resolve that contradiction for you. I think it reflects a variety of things, but I do not think that should be what drives the educational system. I think what we are trying to say is that we would be abrogating our responsibilities as a province and a society to have an educational system that gears people in order to be unthinking automatons.

Ultimately, I do not think that is in the interests of business either. You listen to business people talk about a future where we are all going to have 10 job changes over the course of our lives. Anybody we train narrowly so that he can get a particular job when he exits high school or drops out of high school is going to be in a very tough

way when that job dries up and he has to move on to something else.

Mr. Mahoney: You have talked about the individualistic type of education not being what you would espouse—we have heard the opposite view from other people—versus what you call collective. If you tie in the problem of the vicious circle of being trained to do something in life with the concept of collective education, why would you eliminate business or labour from the collective education being—let us put business and the labour movement in the private sector realm of education.

The co-operative types of programs that are starting to come about would seem to me to be in the interests of the student who has had the opportunity to learn this kind of analytical thinking that is very important in life, and will make better workers and better people in whatever they decide to do in a profession. Why would you not see the type of co-operative programs being something that would be beneficial to sort of direct and break that vicious circle and direct somebody into a particular field? That field could even be the field you are in.

1150

Mr. Turk: Let me clarify a couple of things. First of all, we are not opposed to people learning skills that have job-relatedness as part of their education. What we are saying is education should be not reduced to job training, so apprenticeship programs and various kinds of specific skill-related programs in secondary school are fine.

We are quite supportive of co-op education. I spend a good deal of my time going around the province speaking to groups of co-op teachers, talking about how we can help them get placements for their students in unionized workplaces. We are very much in favour of that. I think there is a very valuable role for that type of experience as part of one's education, but there is a lot of pressure to reduce education to largely that and that is what we are resisting.

We do not see a separation between theory and practice. There is no knowledge without doing something. You cannot just learn it abstractly or philosophically. I have learned most of what I have learned in life by doing it. I learned much more when I had to start teaching a subject than I ever learned when I took the subject, because when I had to do something with it and tell other people about it, then I really had to think it through and learn it. I think that interlinkage of the two is important, so we are very supportive of

those kinds of programs, but we do not want it focused on that or narrowed only to that.

Mr. Mahoney: I know you want to move on. I will just close by saying that maybe when you come back in the fall, we can deal more specifically with the concept of going from the philosophy you have espoused here to the practical side of education.

Mr. Turk: That is what we would like to do in our submission in September or whenever.

Mrs. O'Neill: This ties in very closely with what Mr. Mahoney has said. I have some difficulty, and I really wish you would try to help us a bit more. "Employers' views of the world infuse too much of the curriculum from kindergarten to university.... Closer ties to business will inject even more restriction on genuine intellectual endeavour." Have you got anything to back up those statements? What does that really mean, that they infuse too much of the curriculum?

Mr. Turk: I guess I have a short answer and a long answer to your question.

One can go through the curriculum from kindergarten to grade 13 and identify all sorts of places where work and the experience of workers should be talked about and is not, or where it is talked about but is talked about in a critical or almost defamatory way.

If you want to take the obvious example of history at the secondary school level, the experiences of workers, individually and collectively, get misrepresented; for example, the Canadian Pacific Railway was built by four great men and the experience of tens of thousands of workers is just not part of that history. The Winnipeg General Strike, for example, gets dismissed by one of Canada's foremost historians, Donald Creighton, in one sentence in his history, as a riot in Winnipeg in 1919.

Those are obvious examples, but as we mention in the brief, in kindergarten and grade 1, how often are children taken on a little walk around the neighbourhood and introduced to the kinds of work that go on, to come to an understanding of the role of work and workers so that the dignity of the work people do, however menial it may be, is something that is conveyed to them?

I think more of the philosophy of business—the province is starting up an entrepreneurial studies program to which we take great exception, where a kind of individualistic attitude towards what is successful and what is important in society is what is being stressed, and we have stated those objections to the minister and others.

When we say business infuses it too much, we are not saying that things are too practical in a narrow sense but that the business view of the world and what is important in the world, the ability to compete internationally and the need to put a priority on training people so they get in there and can do that first job so the employer does not have to do as much training and that kind of stuff, infuses too much of the curriculum in the later years. In the early years, the general anti-work and anti-worker bias infuses the guidelines. There just is not enough attention to those kinds of things.

Mrs. O'Neill: Do you have hard data? I know the people who work in affirmative action have done an awful lot of work in curriculum and in textbook analysis. Have you done the same kind of stuff?

Mr. Turk: Yes. Well, not to the same degree. What has happened with regard to gender questions and affirmative action with regard to textbooks and so on is a model of what we think needs to be done more generally on what we call "class." We just think the view of the world and so on is really quite slanted as it is being portrayed. I could bring along lots of examples. We certainly have not done the extent of work that the women's movement has done in recent years, but it is a model of what we think needs to be done with these kinds of questions.

Mrs. O'Neill: You just mentioned entrepreneurial stories, but have you taken any of the curriculum analysis you have done, some of this concrete evidence, to ministry officials in any formal way?

Mr. Turk: We have had some initial discussions. In fact, Dean Effrat, who just appeared before you, and I are putting together a proposal to send to the Ministry of Education to pursue this matter over a three-year study and develop resource materials to resolve it.

Madam Chairman: Before you leave us, Mr. Turk, I just want to add one final comment of my own with reference to the student who said that today you are not taught to question anything. I agree with Mr. Mahoney that in the 1960s, when we were going to school, we certainly were not encouraged to question things. To inject a note of optimism about today's students, I have two children in the school system, and believe me, they question everything and everybody. A lot of this does come from the school.

Mr. Mahoney: It has gone too far the other way.

Mr. Turk: We do have a few. As a parent, I can say certainly that is what my kids do, whether they do it at school with the teachers or not.

Madam Chairman: I certainly know that many of the teachers are focusing on critical thinking and on questioning. I do think we are moving in that direction and it is a note of optimism for the future.

Mr. Turk: May I just comment on that? The difficulties around that kind of education we do not see to be primarily the teacher's fault or the teacher's problem. One of the practical difficulties a teacher has is that teaching where you encourage questioning and criticism is a much less efficient way to teach, because you do not get through the curriculum you planned for that day. You cannot plan as well because these kids bring up things that you may or may not have counted on. When a teacher is faced with too big a class size or unrealistic demands on his or her time, it really impairs his or her ability to do this.

When we are saying this, I want to emphasize, if it is not clear, that what we are saying is that we see this to be a broader system problem, rather than a problem of teachers who simply stifle criticism. We do not see that as fundamentally the problem, although I am sure there are those who do that, as there are politicians who stifle criticism or labour leaders who stifle criticism.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Mahoney just pointed out that I may be having that same difficulty in chairing this meeting; allowing all these creative questions, we do tend to run over time.

Mr. Turk: Bring all the students to question period.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. We look forward to your presentation in September.

Would the Metro Action Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children come forward? Welcome, Ms. Stewart. We understand you have a fairly lengthy presentation and we hope you will be able to allow us sufficient time for questions at the end. We apologize for the late start, but as you can tell, it has been a very stimulating morning and it has been hard to curtail the questions. We will certainly try to give you sufficient time for you to get all your ideas out and have a lively discussion.

Ms. Stewart: OK; sure.

Madam Chairman: If you would like, you may begin.

METRO ACTION COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Ms. Stewart: My name is Catherine Stewart and I am here on behalf of the Metro Action

Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children, or Metrac. As an education consultant and sexual abuse specialist, I have been retained by Metrac to undertake a number of programs, initiatives related to sexual assault prevention in secondary schools in Metro Toronto. Previous to my association with Metrac, I developed a preventive education program on child abuse under the auspices of the Metropolitan Chairman's Special Committee on Child Abuse, and that program has been implemented quite broadly in elementary schools in Metro Toronto as well as other parts of the province.

1200

For those of you who are not familiar with it, Metrac was established by the council of Metropolitan Toronto in 1984 to serve as a catalyst for the implementation of the recommendations of the Task Force on Public Violence Against Women and Children. This task force was formed in response to public pressure after a series of very brutal rape-murders in the summer of 1982, which some of you may remember.

Currently, Metrac works with urban planners, educators, the legal and medical professions, the police, community organizations, survivors of sexual assault and all three levels of government on policy, law reform, support services, research and a variety of educational initiatives.

We are here today basically to comment on how we see the goals of education in relation to the very real problems we are trying to address in general and how, in turn, these problems affect the goal of equal life chances and full development of each student.

Through direct involvement with the schools, we have been able to observe the increasing polarization between those educators who advocate a back-to-basics approach, believing that schools should primarily facilitate the transition to the adult world of work, and those who believe, as we do, that the schools should serve a broader function designed to prepare young people for the full range of roles they are expected to fill in society. We are concerned that the trend demonstrated in the Radwanski report might affect programming related to important social issues.

Over the last number of years, society has been confronted with the ugly reality of the prevalence of violence and abuse, particularly sexual abuse. In 1984, we were told by a federal report, usually referred to as the Badgley report, that we could expect that one out of two women and one out of three men would suffer at least one sexual

offence during their lifetime, and four out of five of these would happen before the age of 21.

An American study concluded that 25 per cent of sexually abused children are abused before the age of seven. A survey conducted in Winnipeg, Manitoba, found that 27 per cent of women are sexually assaulted at some point in their lives, 49.5 per cent before the age of 17. Another federal report more recently concluded that one out of five women is abused by her partner and 60 per cent of all female murder victims are killed within a family context.

When added to the many other forms of abuse and violence in our society, what certainly emerges is an alarming prevalence that unquestionably affects the quality of life for all of us. Numerous studies have documented the short and long-term effects of sexual and other forms of abuse. In the short term, victims often suffer intense anguish, fear, a deep sense of helplessness and betrayal. The trauma of abuse interferes dramatically and often irreparably with the emotional, physical and intellectual development of a child.

The long-term effects are equally disturbing. Dr. Vail Williams has found that of adult patients sexually abused as children, 22 per cent had multiple personalities, 95 per cent had a poor self-image, 58 per cent were nonsexual and 84 per cent had attempted suicide.

Other studies have established correlations between child sexual abuse and learning disabilities, drug-alcohol abuse, prostitution, runaway children, dysfunctional relationships and crime. It is important to note that Hitler was a product of child abuse. In fact, it has been shown that virtually "all violent juvenile delinquents have been abused children," that "all criminals at San Quentin prison...studied had violent upbringings as children"—in fact, at San Quentin they also found that 95 per cent of the women and 90 per cent of the men had been sexually abused—and that "all assassins...in the United States during the past 20 years had been victims of child abuse."

Indeed, Radwanski pointed to an abusive home as a primary contributor to students dropping out of school. It is easy to imagine that if a child's life is dominated by the pain of ongoing abuse, this is likely to have an effect on his or her ability to concentrate, to absorb information and on his or her ultimate level of academic achievement. Not surprisingly, poverty, long associated causally with abuse, can also be an outcome of it.

What this means is that in Ontario schools, one out of four girls and one out of 10 boys will have been sexually abused before they graduate and that one out of five women will have been raped by the time she is in college. Furthermore, it is clear that not only potential and actual victims are sitting in our classrooms, but also potential and actual abusers. In fact, one out of four sex offenders is a teenager.

Certainly, the goals of "equal chances and full development for each student" will be meaningless as long as abuse and sexual exploitation affect so many students.

To be more specific, and drawing on our own experiences: There are no equal chances for the student whose self-worth and mental wellbeing has been destroyed by a sexually abusing father; for the student forced to leave school after a gang rape at a school party; for the boy daily ridiculed for his sexual preference. Equal chances have been compromised for the female student forced to leave school because of ongoing sexual harassment by male students; for the sexually assaulted student forced to confront her assailant every day in the classroom; for the student who was propositioned by her teacher; for the student who lost a credit trying to avoid the unwanted touching of a male teacher; for the student expected to do homework, but who must do it in a situation where his or her mother is regularly beaten.

The prevalence of abuse points to a number of failures in our society including:

The failure of nurturance: "The failure of nurturance in human relationships, beginning with the parent-child relationship...is the principal overriding factor...in the development of alienation, psychopathy, violence and aggression." The education system cannot be expected to be able to fully compensate for a non-nurturing family, but if the school environment is in itself non-nurturing, perceived by many students, as Radwanski indicated, as cold and uncaring, then it must surely be held at least partially responsible for the failure of nurturance and consequent outcomes as stated above.

Alice Miller has recently written powerfully and persuasively about the contribution of "poisonous pedagogy" to violence. Although the time allowed today prohibits me from fully explaining this concept, it is one with which I think all educators, and indeed this select committee, should familiarize themselves and is very much reflected in our present educational institutions. I would like to draw your attention to her book in terms of that.

The failure of socialization: The other failure I think this broad range of abuse points to is the failure of socialization. Parents, peers, the media and school are the primary instruments of socialization and must therefore share responsibility for what young people are taught in terms of skills, knowledge, behaviour and values. Abuse is generally symptomatic of dysfunction in all four of these areas. Allow me to concentrate on the role of education, as it is our contention that the school has a particularly significant role to play in terms of both counteracting the negative effects of our socializers, and more proactively, providing modelling and leadership for a way of life that is free from violence.

Skills: At the risk of oversimplification, it is probably true to say that abuse among other things reflects an inability to get one's needs met in healthy and constructive ways. Abuse, for example, dating and wife abuse, is often the outcome of an inability to take responsibility for, express and deal with feelings, as well as an inability to resolve conflict nonviolently.

Child abuse is often related to a lack of parenting skills. But where do people have the opportunity to learn these skills, particularly if they are not demonstrated in the home? Perhaps more to the point, when do those of us concerned that people acquire these skills get the opportunity to teach them? The logical answer is, of course, in the school.

It is worth while noting, for the benefit of those interested in the school as primarily preparing young people for work, that skill in interpersonal relationships is increasingly a requirement for a successful working life, particularly as we move more and more towards a service economy. Radwanski did mention the importance of communication skills, both oral and written, but it seemed this did not include affective communication. He did mention stress management, however, and we would concur with the importance of this, particularly in the context of abuse prevention.

Knowledge: While acknowledging the role of the abusive home in students dropping out, Radwanski makes no reference to the importance of teaching about abuse. Yet children, whether abused at home, at school or in some other situation, are often unlikely to define the treatment as abuse, much less disclose it, unless they have been taught about it. Furthermore, much abuse is the direct result of ignorance: ignorance of its effects on the recipient, ignorance of child development, ignorance of self and ignorance of healthy alternatives. Again, the

school has both the opportunity and, we believe, the responsibility to dispel this kind of ignorance.

Behaviour: Behaviour is a conditioned response that may or may not be consistent with one's knowledge or values. For instance, a rapist may know better but feel powerless to change an ingrained and compulsive behaviour. One cannot ignore either, particularly when talking about sexual assault, the role of conditioned behaviour which is gender-specific and a direct outcome of sexist attitudes.

There is much in current research to indicate that the sexual exploitation of women by men is behaviour that is widely accepted, encouraged and even celebrated in our culture. We have been able to observe this kind of tolerance in the schools, for example, "Women who get raped ask for it" and "It's OK to force someone to have sex in certain circumstances." This kind of tolerance has also been dramatically demonstrated in Metrac's research on sexual assault sentencing.

1210

If a child has learned abusive behaviour in the home or elsewhere, then the school becomes a last-chance alternative for teaching and modelling nonabusive behaviour and interaction. School boards attempting to deal with abuse, including wife assault, sexual assault, sexual harassment and child abuse, are to be applauded and supported.

On the other hand, school boards that retain corporal punishment, that do nothing to curtail emotionally abusive teaching methods, that have no policy in place concerning sexual harassment, etc., should be encouraged to address these and other contradictions that in effect condone abusive behaviour. Education has a vital role to play in challenging learned attitudes and resulting behaviour patterns.

Values: I was really delighted to hear Mr. Turk talk about values. We certainly feel that this is not something we should be backing away from. The Badgley report concluded that the widespread prevalence of child sexual abuse is indicative of "a deeper malaise" that requires "a fundamental shift in values" by society. This viewpoint is not dissimilar to that of an earlier report on child abuse:

"The committee is convinced that the problem of violent crime is part of a much greater malaise. The advance of civilization, the rapid development of technology and of a highly materialistic sense of social values have accelerated the process of divorcing western man from the rest of nature and of encouraging the belief that man is

above nature and not ultimately accountable to it. But can we understand, and truly respect, one form of life without an empathy for and balanced sensitivity toward all forms of life? The disturbed child of seven who systematically abuses a younger child, or who regularly abuses defenceless animals or who frequently engages in serious acts of vandalism has a history of poor bonding with its environment."

It seems we will not get very far in either understanding or preventing child abuse, sexual assault in general, wife assault, or, as indicated above, abuse of the environment until we begin to recognize that what we are facing is a widespread pattern of abuse which, far from being aberrant and isolated from the mainstream of society, is an integral part of its very fabric.

In fact widespread violence, instead of being surprising, is a logical outcome of our society's values: values we see demonstrated every day on television, in families, in the community. There is much to indicate that we are a society addicted to violence. Furthermore, its various causes and manifestations reflect our less-than-perfect attitudes towards women, children, sexuality, power and powerlessness. In order to address the roots of violence, including sexual assault, it is necessary to change these attitudes and the values that underlie them.

No one system, let alone an individual, can accomplish such change in isolation. But it is incumbent on the educational system as a primary conveyer of values to children to counter negative socialization and to ensure that it does not reinforce the very values that contribute to the tolerance of sexual and other forms of violence.

For example, if sexism is contained in textbooks and reinforced in the classroom, then the school can be said to be actively contributing to violence against women, an obvious outcome of sexism. For if women and children are degraded and devalued in one setting, it gives implicit permission for them to be degraded in other settings and in other, including violent, ways. Similarly, if the school environment does little to promote self-esteem or, worse, damages it, it will be increasing the chances of individual students being victimized or becoming victimizers.

We agree with Radwanski that the current education goal as stated is insufficient. What we should be promoting are values that are incompatible with abuse.

Overloading the curriculum: I would like to address this because this is an issue that we have found comes up over and over again when you

start talking about social issues. Concern again was expressed in the Radwanski report that the curriculum is "overloaded and fragmented." In fact it has been our experience that many educators feel overwhelmed by the sheer volume of social issues and are often resistant to dealing with yet another one, particularly if it is a sensitive and difficult one like sexual assault.

However, as I have already indicated, there is a relationship between most of these problems, and when one looks at what needs to be taught to prevent them, the commonalities become even clearer. For example, the development of self-esteem is critical to the prevention of almost every form of abuse. Since self-esteem has also proved to be a better predictor of academic success than intelligence test scores, its continued inclusion is quite compatible, if not necessary, to other more traditional educational goals. Similarly, the elimination of sex role stereotyping would go a long way in reducing both physical and sexual violence towards women and children, as well as generally improving working and personal relationships between men and women.

What is badly needed is a conceptual framework within which these social issues and strategies for their prevention can be addressed. Once this conceptual framework is established, then curriculum content, school board policy and student services can be geared to dealing with the broad range of social issues efficiently, effectively and consistently.

Those who cry for more math, more science, more technology might find worthy of note the comment of a grade 11 student in a parenting class where sexual assault was being discussed: "Math and science are compulsory, but when are we going to use those? But this—this is about our lives—this should be compulsory."

We would like to make, therefore, the following recommendations:

1. That the role of the education system, in terms of both early detection and prevention of all forms of abuse, be specified in the goals of education for Ontario.

2. That the committee specifically address gender in terms of goals and philosophy and the role of the school system in seeking to eliminate sexism.

3. That the curriculum reflect goals regarding abuse in mandatory subject areas including, for example, healthy sexuality, media literacy and personal safety.

4. That serious consideration be given to the task of developing a comprehensive framework

within which social issues could be addressed and that it be specified that the school is a suitable vehicle for the prevention of social problems; and that the skills, knowledge, behaviour and values that need to be taught specific to this aim be introduced, beginning in nursery school and proceeding as is appropriate to students' intellectual and emotional development.

5. That the committee consider the following recommendations from a federal task force:

"If we are to teach children how to respect their human and natural environment and all its elements, they must be taught they are a part of nature... One of the objectives of education from nursery school onwards must be to give children a balanced sensitivity to life—a humane education which» should include: (a) factual information about animals, people and the environment and their interrelationship; (b) problem-solving skills to assist students in critical thinking and making intelligent choices; (c) a climate in which the worth of the individual is stressed and each child is encouraged to develop a positive self-image essential to valuing others; and (d) values, or moral education, focusing on the rights of other living beings and human responsibilities toward them."

6. That how subjects are taught be recognized to be as important as what is taught and that this committee become familiar with Alice Miller's concept of "poisonous pedagogy," which addresses very specifically that problem.

7. That goals relevant to abuse prevention, e.g., "Develop a sense of self-worth," be clearly spelled out in terms of (a) how they can be practically achieved, so that we will not see this great gap that we are seeing between theory and practice in the schools; (b) what kind of curriculum programming is necessary; (c) what kind of board policies are necessary; (d) what kind of professional development for teachers and administrators is necessary; and (e) how parents and the community can be involved.

In conclusion, while problems such as illiteracy and drop-outs are important, they are not more disturbing than the very wide prevalence of sexual and other forms of violence. We are concerned that current attempts to deal with these issues, however, particularly by those advocating a traditional core curriculum, might discourage the development of abuse prevention programming, whereas in reality there is a relationship between abuse, illiteracy and drop-outs. Comprehensive programming could be instrumental in reducing the incidence of all these problems.

It is our belief that outcomes of education should be measured not only in terms of the skills and knowledge acquired by individual students, but also by the health of a society as a whole. A society where so many people, especially women and children, live in daily fear of violence, and where that fear serves to restrict their everyday activities and choices, is not a healthy society.

It is clear in looking at the world at large that we ignore the need for a fundamental shift in values at our peril. The world is in crisis, and no one understands that better than our children, 70 per cent of whom believe they will not grow up. It is therefore of the greatest importance and urgency that the education system both recognizes the problem of abuse and actively works towards its elimination. Nonviolent values and attitudes must be reflected in educational goals, philosophy, curriculum and the culture of the school itself. In short, we must demonstrate and instil in our children values that are incompatible with one person abusing another, himself or herself or the world around him or her. Our very survival depends on it.

We thank the committee for hearing us today and hope that you will give our concerns serious consideration. We would also welcome the opportunity to expand on these ideas at a later date and hope we will have an opportunity to do so.

I would also like to say that Jane Pepino, who is the chairperson of our board, was unable to attend today but would be happy to consult with you in the future.

1220

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much, Ms. Stewart. We really appreciate the way you have brought the issue before us today in such a factual and articulate and very sensitive manner. It is something that we, as legislators, are trying very hard to grapple with at this time. We have had the studies, we have had the reviews, we know the problem, but what we need to do at this stage is start to concretely deal with it.

The Solicitor General (Mrs. Smith) has announced some initiatives which are starting on the way, but you and your presentation today, to my mind—and I apologize for giving my personal opinions, which, as chairman, of course, I am not supposed to do—I feel you have given us some guidance in the direction in which we should be going, certainly in the area of education. Thank you.

We will extend the time of our sitting today to deal with the questions. I have first on the list Mr. Jackson.

Mr. Jackson: I too wish to commend Catherine for a tremendous brief, and I am glad you did not make it brief because of the importance of covering the broad spectrum. There are still some areas as well which I know you would have liked to get into and there are issues that we will deal with. It should be noted that you will be coming again before this committee in September to deal with some of the curriculum matters and other items, and hopefully in the spring and summer review periods as well.

There are lots of other issues I know you would have liked to touch on, even with respect to items such as the appropriateness of certain guidance counselling and the manner in which we select guidance counsellors, the surplus redundancy pools and collective bargaining complications, so that we do not really come up with the very best people. Sometimes we end up with the football coach being the guidance counsellor for some of these victims of violence, and that seems to me to be a terrible irony, in and of itself.

Also, unsupervised playgrounds are a growing problem in this province. The committee should note that the Education Act says that a principal is responsible for the entire school day but there are large whacks of the school day where kids are unsupervised and that is another area of concern.

However, I would like to address the issue of goals and I appreciate the fact that you have so clearly enunciated a recommendation that would call for us to create a 14th goal, since clearly the 13 goals as currently stated do not have a specific reference to the problem of sexism in our schools and the development of the child in terms of a healthier environment at school to prevent—or, as you aptly put it, and I want to quote it again for Hansard, “If a child has learned abusive behaviour in the home or elsewhere, then the school becomes a last-chance alternative for teaching and modelling nonabusive behaviour and interaction.”

I think that is probably one of the most significant statements this committee can take with it. Obviously you agree that we should, as a committee, pass a recommendation to increase to a 14th goal to include that. I can assure you that I will be tabling one, and I may seek assistance from you and Ms. Pepino to help clarify the wording of such a recommendation.

I want to talk about the manner in which school boards throughout Ontario have a patchwork approach to the issue of sexual harassment. We do not have policies in place in all boards, whether it is between teachers in terms of

promotion or whether it is between teacher and student—both of those should be highlighted—as well as the manner in which school boards tend to cover up.

From 10 years of experience, I have four clear cases documented that were covered up within my own board that disturbed me deeply. I felt I was totally ineffective because all I could do was have the teacher eliminated from my school jurisdiction, but I could not get him out of the system, not even a probationary teacher. It seems that we must do something more in order to prevent that from happening, whether or not it is an old boys' network that surrounds a teacher and says, "We will deal with this on our own."

We cannot even get documented cases put in a teacher's record in terms of—I am sorry; I know Mr. Johnston will want to talk to me about this element of it—protecting teachers and their rights and so on, but I think we have to grapple with that issue if we are going to really get at the root of the problem. Some teachers involved in this activity should not be teaching, and I am sorry if that is perceived as a hard issue, but it is something we have to grapple with. Could you comment on that area?

It was not an area that was very much dealt with in this. We are curriculum-based and environment- and goals-oriented, but I would like you to talk a bit about the teacher thing.

Ms. Stewart: Do you mean teacher harassment of students or just the general area?

Mr. Jackson: The problem of documenting this and then getting a teacher removed from the classroom, until it is absolutely too late.

Ms. Stewart: Yes. There is a problem and you have identified a number of areas in there that are definitely a problem. We have certainly identified policy gaps even in boards that have sexual harassment policies. For instance, in one board we found they had a policy in place, but there was nothing to cover when students were harassing another student, there was nothing to cover when students were harassing a staff person or when a caretaker was harassing a staff person. So harassment tends to be defined in terms of someone having superiority from a job point of view, whereas that ignores the gender reality where someone has power by virtue of his gender and is able to exercise that. The whole policy around that is a problem.

In terms of documentation, part of that is the difficulty of procedure, and we see not only teachers who may be harassing other teachers or students falling between the cracks of the policy, but we certainly see, in terms of the law, there is a

real problem in terms of teachers who have allegedly sexually abused children and are brought to the courts and, due to the very real problem of having those cases successfully prosecuted, are acquitted by the court and then the school board is left in the very dicey position of what to do with that teacher, particularly if it believes the assault did in fact happen. I know the unions struggle with that issue as well.

You have identified some very real issues and I think it is very important to recognize that you cannot deal with this issue just through curriculum or just through any one thing; it has to be a multifaceted approach in order to cover all your bases. Otherwise, you have this very contradictory situation.

Mr. Jackson: I would like to recommend to the committee—I will get a copy for the clerk to circulate—the Stopping Rape II forum. It identifies within the Ministry of Education five recommendations for action, and I would commend those to this committee for further examination. Perhaps between the two of us we can get that material to the committee, and perhaps even some of the background information from the session leaders who dealt with that issue. I will not go over the five points now, but I think they should be recommended as well to the committee for its examination on this issue.

In the interests of time, I will yield to other questioners, even though I have several more.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Jackson. We know you are very interested in tackling this issue and we appreciate your passing on your time to other members. Mr. Johnston and Mr. Mahoney.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: For years, various committees have tried to get family violence issues into the curriculum and starting back in 1982 was the first time I think I was involved in it, with limited success, quite frankly, in terms of the curriculum changes across the province and also in terms of even the status of family studies kinds of programs.

1230

There are two areas of questions I have for you. One is in terms of how your stated goal around abuse, which I would support, gets listed in the way we have our goals listed in their self-actualization style there. I wonder whether you see us trying to turn it into some sort of a wording based around self-worth and respect for other individuals as something we are trying to inculcate, or whether in fact we should be looking at a second set of goals.

You have your self-actualization-style goals, the liberal philosophy of education if I can put it that way, then maybe we should list a number of other goals for society that we have coming out of the education system. One of those things would be the identification of abuse and the moving away from the sort of love of violence that seems to be in society, and setting up maybe the feminization of curriculum. We could then put these kinds of things in a second listing of goals. I worry a little bit about this being as useless as all these others have been, if we just lay it down as another one of these.

Ms. Stewart: That is why I did add to the recommendations the importance of really spelling out how these things are to be achieved, because we have self-worth in the goals, and respect, but that is not happening in a lot of cases, obviously. People do not seem to tie those things together. That is part of the reason I have suggested identifying abuse and articulating nonviolence, rather than just talking in more general terms of respect.

In terms of how you would do that, I think your idea is an interesting one. Certainly, it should be recognized that we do not have just individual goals but that there are some societal goals to be served as well through the educational system. That would certainly articulate it if that were broken down.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It seems to me that if we did it that way and we put together things like poverty and cost-consciousness, those kinds of things Mr. Turk was talking about—basically talking about the power of relationships that are there—and we had another adjunct set of goals, it might be a useful thing to do.

I presume, although you did not want to deal with it in great detail, that you will be coming back to talk to us about the sort of poisonous pedagogy, the sort of macho nature of our school system that has really been striking me a lot lately. When we think about what are the basics, we leave out a lot of qualities such as female positive attributes that are often missing in our social fabric. In terms of the teaching methodologies, there is a great deal that can be learned from that as well. We wanted three Cs added—caring, co-operation and concern, I think they were—which seemed to me to be just as basic and are really missing within our curriculum at the moment. Is that the direction you are going to move us in?

Ms. Stewart: Yes. I certainly would like to talk about that. It is so easy to contradict. I have been in a classroom talking about, for instance,

the importance of young people standing up for themselves and that they have a right to say no to touches they do not want and a right to say no to adults, and having a teacher right at my hand screaming at a child who says, "Why are you picking on me?" and her saying, "Do not talk back." This happened right in the course of this teaching. It was very clearly demonstrated—and in many other situations—that ongoing contradiction.

There is a lot of general lip service given to the whole concept of respect, for instance, but you just have to walk into a school to see how often that respect for children is violated. I think all of those things need to be addressed, and we would be happy to come back and talk more specifically to those things.

Mr. Mahoney: Just very briefly, I, too, was very impressed with your presentation, and I particularly refer to your recommendation number 4 on page 14, the second part of it, "And that the skills, knowledge, behaviour and values that need to be taught specific to this aim be done so."

We have had other people talking about the crowded curriculum and the concern they have that every time we have a social problem come up, whether it is AIDS or whether it is sex education or whatever it happens to be, we throw it into the schools. I, for one, think that is an appropriate place to put it. I think this recommendation would tend to say, "Let's put together a program"—I do not know what you would call it; life studies or whatever—"that should be, in fact, a specific part of a curriculum." That seems to be getting back a little to the educational aspects of the philosophy of education.

You espoused the position earlier that you believe schools should serve a broader function, designing for young people a full range of roles. I am just a little concerned that recommendation 4 is actually contrary to that in the sense that it potentially involves setting up a specific subject or a specific core area where young people would be taught about certain values in life, starting very young. I think that is good.

I get concerned, as I did during the previous presentation, that we are going to have a bunch of graduates at some point quite capable of sitting around and talking about wonderful philosophical ideas but without any specific tools to do certain jobs. How do you balance the thing of, say, teaching them specific aspects—in your particular case, about violence and sexual harassment, which I see as very specific—and yet just sort of teaching them a general philosophy of education?

Ms. Stewart: I think if you have a comprehensive framework and that framework is consistent with the goals, policy, teaching methods and the content of the curriculum, then what you are doing is reducing repetition. You are making it consistent. You are taking out some of the contradictions.

I think part of the reason this becomes so overwhelming is that we try to deal with each issue individually. Not that we should not deal with, say, the dynamics of sexual abuse as opposed to physical abuse separately, but when we are looking at prevention, it is so important that we understand that all these things have common roots. We have to address those roots in order to do something about them.

The tendency right now in schools in Ontario is that social issues are dealt with in a very fragmented way, often in an inconsistent way and usually in a one-shot kind of deal. You bring in a movie, you show a movie, that is the end of it. There is no ongoing reiteration of the principles that are introduced through those programs. For instance, in our elementary school program, we go into the school and we talk about assertiveness. There is no ongoing encouragement for children to be assertive. Teaching them for two weeks that they have a right to be assertive is not going to achieve very much unless it is an ongoing belief, part of the culture of the school, with children encouraged to do that. Of course, that has implications for children being critical thinkers as well.

Creating a comprehensive framework and understanding how these things are interrelated leads not only to making it more efficient but also to making it more consistent. I agree with Mr. Turk; there is this incredible discrepancy between theory and action. The education goals as presently stated by Ontario are contradicted every day in the classroom. They have been contradicted directly by teachers in what they say to me. I think we need to work towards having that kind of concept.

I do not think that is inconsistent with broadening the range of goals, because I see that once you have established what that framework is, then you integrate that with all different subject areas. You do not just have it in one place—although it would be nice to have it in one place as being mandatory; we would all like that—it should also be integrated with other subject areas. Again, I will be talking more about that in September.

Mr. Mahoney: It becomes a philosophy of how to teach, in reality. You weave it all through. You do not tell someone to be assertive by telling him to sit down and shut up, which of course is exactly what happens.

Ms. Stewart: That is right.

Mr. Mahoney: Just so I am clear, I guess you agree that there obviously has to be a structure and there has to be a pretty strong format.

Ms. Stewart: Absolutely.

Mr. Mahoney: You cannot have the kids running the school, in that sense, but they certainly should be participants.

Ms. Stewart: I think there is room for democratization, which would help everyone in the long term.

Mr. Mahoney: I am sure we are all products of anything but a democratic school system.

Madam Chairman: That may be either very good or very bad. I will not comment on that. I believe that is it for the questioners. Thank you very much, Ms. Stewart. We do appreciate the fact that you are coming back in September and perhaps even fine-tuning it a little bit more and giving us some more concrete examples of what we can do in the education system.

We are now going to move in camera for a subcommittee meeting. I would ask that the room be cleared as quickly as possible. The select committee on education will reconvene at 2 p.m.

The committee continued in camera at 12:40 p.m.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The committee resumed at 2:08 p.m. in room 151.

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS
OF EDUCATION
(continued)
LA PHILOSOPHIE ET LES
OBJETS DE L'ÉDUCATION
(suite)

Madam Chairman: I will open this afternoon's session of the select committee on education as we continue in our review of the goals and philosophy of education. We do have a number of French presentations this afternoon. I will apologize in advance for any of my attempts at the French language. Unfortunately, or fortunately perhaps, my children are far better versed in the language than I am. I will apologize in advance and say I will try my best.

I understand that they have very kindly offered to accept questions from the members in English for those of us who are trying hard but maybe have a little bit of difficulty with the transition. We are very fortunate this afternoon to have two bilingual members with us. There are more than that. Four and a half and counting.

I will call on Noble Villeneuve to introduce the groups before us this afternoon.

M. Villeneuve: Merci bien, Madame la Présidente. Il me fait plaisir et c'est pour moi un honneur de présenter les témoins au Comité. C'est une présentation commune: premièrement, l'Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario, connue communément comme l'ACFO; l'Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens, l'AEFO; l'Association française des conseils scolaires de l'Ontario, l'AFCO; l'Association des surintendantes et des surintendants franco-ontariens, l'ASFO; et la Fédération des associations parents-instituteurs de langue française de l'Ontario, la FAPI.

Nous avons M^{me} Rolande Soucie, présidente de l'ACFO; M. Yves Sincennes, premier vice-président de l'AEFO; et M^{me} Ginette Gratton, directrice générale de l'AFCO. Bienvenue à tous.

Mme la Présidente: Bonjour. Cet après-midi, plusieurs présentations seront données en français. Bienvenue. Begin at your convenience, and we ask you to leave sufficient time for questions at the end. I know we have a number of members

very interested in the issues of the francophone community.

ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE-FRANÇAISE
DE L'ONTARIO
ASSOCIATION DES ENSEIGNANTES ET
DES ENSEIGNANTS FRANCO-ONTARIENS
ASSOCIATION FRANÇAISE DES
CONSEILS SCOLAIRES DE L'ONTARIO

Mme Soucie: Merci, Madame la Présidente et membres du Comité spécial de l'éducation. Plusieurs associations francophones qui s'intéressent au domaine de l'éducation ont décidé d'unir leurs efforts et de présenter au Comité spécial de l'éducation un mémoire commun. Les commentaires qui suivent ont été appuyés par l'Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario, l'Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens, l'Association française des conseils scolaires de l'Ontario, l'Association des surintendantes et des surintendants franco-ontariens et la Fédération des associations parents-instituteurs. Nous remercions le Comité d'avoir accepté de nous recevoir en groupe.

Philosophie de l'éducation: Nous souscrivons au principe que l'éducation est un processus continu visant à permettre à toute citoyenne et à tout citoyen de se développer selon son plein potentiel sur les plans physique, intellectuel, affectif, social, culturel, moral et religieux.

Puisqu'il s'agit d'un processus continu, le gouvernement a donc une responsabilité envers les élèves qui sont d'âge à fréquenter les écoles élémentaires et secondaires, envers celles et ceux qui veulent fréquenter les institutions postsecondaires et aussi envers la population adulte, qui a besoin, dans une société en plein épanouissement, de programmes de formation professionnelle et personnelle. L'éducation préscolaire doit aussi faire partie de la politique de développement de l'éducation franco-ontarienne, et dans ce sens, les garderies francophones en milieu scolaire doivent être privilégiées.

L'Ontario s'est donné une obligation additionnelle en adoptant la Loi sur les services en français. Dans le préambule de cette loi, on dit ce qui suit:

«Attendu que la langue française a joué en Ontario un rôle historique et honorable, et que la constitution lui reconnaît le statut de langue officielle au Canada; attendu que cette langue jouit, en Ontario, du statut de langue officielle devant les tribunaux et dans l'éducation; attendu

que l'Assemblée législative reconnaît l'apport du patrimoine culturel de la population francophone et désire le sauvegarder pour les générations à venir; et attendu qu'il est souhaitable de garantir l'emploi de la langue française dans les institutions de la Législature et du gouvernement de l'Ontario, comme le prévoit la présente loi»...

L'engagement à long terme du gouvernement de sauvegarder le patrimoine culturel de la communauté francophone doit se refléter dans l'élaboration de la philosophie de l'éducation en Ontario.

Par contre, nous sommes préoccupés par la vision de l'éducation qui est mise de l'avant dans le document intitulé «Competing in the New Global Economy», report of the Premier's Council, vol. 1, publié en 1988. En insistant sur le fait que le système d'éducation doit s'ajuster aux standards dictés par l'industrie pour ses futurs employés, ce rapport oublie tous les autres buts non moins légitimes de notre système d'éducation. De plus, contrairement à ce qu'affirme ce rapport à la page 223, le principal défi auquel l'Ontario fait face n'est pas, pour nous, une augmentation des scores sur des examens standardisés. Nous nous opposons à cette vision réductionniste des buts de l'éducation, vision qui demande que le système soit centré sur la production de travailleuses et de travailleurs pour l'industrie et non sur le développement de futurs citoyens et citoyennes de l'Ontario capables de penser clairement, de ressentir profondément et d'agir intelligemment.

Nous sommes aussi très inquiets des effets négatifs de l'accord commercial canado-américain sur l'éducation ontarienne. Nous craignons que cet accord ne fasse subir à l'éducation canadienne et à l'éducation ontarienne des pressions accrues pour ressembler davantage au système d'éducation américain, système qui, à notre avis, offre des conditions inégales d'enseignement et d'apprentissage dans ses écoles.

Il est donc primordial pour nous que, malgré l'accord commercial entre le Canada et les États-Unis, le gouvernement de l'Ontario continue à offrir à tous ses citoyens les memes chances de s'éduquer, et qu'il continue à considérer comme faisant partie intégrante de son mandat la mise en place de structures spécifiques répondant aux besoins éducatifs de la communauté franco-ontarienne.

Le document «Questions et orientations» présente treize énoncés de buts qui pourraient facilement rallier notre appui, si on y trouvait une reconnaissance plus évidente de l'existence de

deux peuples fondateurs qui ont des caractéristiques particulières. Ce n'est pas tout d'aider chaque apprenant à se développer selon son potentiel, encore faut-il que l'éducation respecte les croyances et les pratiques de la communauté à laquelle elle s'adresse.

Nous reconnaissons que le système d'éducation ontarien, comme tout autre système d'éducation, doit se donner une orientation spécifique qui réponde aux aspirations socioculturelles de toute sa population. Nous voyons toutefois des variantes fondamentales qui sous-tendent l'éducation en langue française en Ontario. Celle-ci s'appuie sur des principes de cultures différentes, tout en poursuivant les memes orientations provinciales. L'école de langue française en Ontario se veut ontarienne dans ses orientations, francophone dans sa culture et franco-ontarienne dans le contexte de ses nouvelles valeurs.

L'ouvrage intitulé «L'Éducation française en Ontario à l'heure de l'immersion», Louis-Gabriel Bordeleau, principal chercheur, rendu public en juin 1988 – donc tout récemment – exprime bien notre pensée à ce sujet. À la page 114 on lit, et je cite:

«pour une minorité, les institutions sociales ont comme fonction primordiale la transmission et la promotion active chez ses membres du sentiment profond de leur appartenance et de leur identité culturelles ainsi que les valeurs qui au cours des années ont contribué à la créer pour ainsi dire. Les institutions sociales d'une minorité ne se séparent pas de son histoire et donc reflètent une réalité autrement plus puissante que la seule compétence linguistique à laquelle tout le monde peut avoir accès par l'étude.»

Nous croyons donc approprié de vous suggérer qu'aux buts généraux de l'éducation en Ontario se greffe celui d'aider chaque élève à se sentir à l'aise au sein de la collectivité dont il est membre, en développant sa capacité de bien s'exprimer dans sa langue et de vivre sa culture. Cela implique qu'on reconnaisse pour la communauté francophone les objectifs particuliers suivants:

Premièrement, permettre à l'élève d'acquérir les capacités de s'épanouir en français, de sorte qu'il s'implique et contribue au développement de sa communauté;

Deuxièmement, développer une connaissance, une compréhension et un attachement à la culture française et à sa langue maternelle;

Troisièmement, développer une connaissance, une appréciation et une acceptation de l'anglais afin d'être des citoyens à part entière;

Quatrièmement, développer les compétences nécessaires à une insertion véritable et productive comme francophone dans le milieu social contemporain;

Cinquièmement, aider l'élève à apprécier et à développer sa foi et les valeurs qui s'y rattachent.

Avec le nouvel Accord constitutionnel de 1987, la reconnaissance de l'existence des deux communautés francophone et anglophone du Canada fera désormais partie de notre constitution. Il s'agit là du meilleur code pour revoir la philosophie et les buts de l'éducation en Ontario. Dans ce contexte, le défi à relever, c'est d'adopter une philosophie de l'éducation qui reconnaisse le plein droit de cité à l'éducation franco-ontarienne; c'est de traduire cette philosophie dans des objectifs explicites de développement de la fierté de parler et de vivre en français en Ontario.

L'Ontario bénéficie aujourd'hui d'une chance inégalée de donner un sens à l'accord du lac Meech. Nous enjoignons aux membres du Comité de souligner cela au gouvernement et de lui rappeler sa responsabilité d'établir, comme cosignataire de cet accord, l'égalité juridique et pratique des deux communautés de langue officielle. Une réforme du système d'éducation de la province qui touche non seulement la formation au sein de l'école française mais aussi la gestion de l'éducation franco-ontarienne est à la base d'une telle égalité entre francophones et anglophones en Ontario.

Nous nous sommes déjà engagés dans cette voie en Ontario avec les modifications récentes de la Loi sur l'éducation. Il faut maintenant aller plus loin, faire appel à toute la créativité dont nous sommes capables pour nous doter du système d'éducation qui sera le plus susceptible de bien préparer les jeunes francophones et anglophones de la province à participer entièrement à la construction de l'Ontario de demain.

Merci de votre attention.

Mme la Présidente: Merci, madame. Does this conclude the formal part of your presentation?

Ms. Soucie: Yes, it does.

Mme la Présidente: Merci de votre présentation. La première question, M. Villeneuve.

1420

M. Villeneuve: Merci bien, Madame la Présidente. Je vous remercie de votre présentation et d'une explication approfondie de ce que vous voyez comme le but de l'éducation franco-ontarienne. Je crois que notre culture est certainement centrée sur le fait que nous sommes

bel et bien une minorité dans un océan d'anglophones; mais par contre, il faut être reconnu tout spécialement.

Du côté des textes scolaires, pourriez-vous faire quelques commentaires? Selon votre opinion, les textes scolaires que nous avons en ce moment, les livres dont se servent nos étudiants au niveau primaire mais particulièrement au niveau secondaire, sont-ils bien adaptés à notre culture tout à fait spéciale ici, en Ontario?

M. Sincennes: De plus en plus, on est en train d'écrire de nouveaux livres. Je pense que ce dont le Comité devrait tenir compte, c'est que les livres en français pour les Franco-Ontariens coûtent souvent trois fois le prix des livres en anglais, et à un moment donné on ne peut pas se doter de volumes qui soient vraiment adéquats. Donc, il est assez important que le Comité sensibilise le gouvernement au fait que, pour avoir des livres qui soient adéquats, il va falloir vraiment dépenser des sommes additionnelles, et je pense que le gouvernement fédéral a souvent donné de l'aide à la province de ce côté-là. Donc, on a de plus en plus de livres, mais il faut encourager davantage la publication et la création de livres adéquats pour nos jeunes, tant à l'élémentaire qu'au secondaire.

M. Villeneuve: Alors, on parle de nos propres textes et non de textes importés de France ou de traductions de nos textes anglais, lesquels ne reflètent pas, d'après moi, la culture franco-ontarienne.

M. Sincennes: De plus en plus, même en ce qui concerne les traductions, on n'accepte plus une traduction simplement régulière d'un texte qui a été fait en anglais. On veut que la traduction soit vraiment l'expression de notre culture et, à ce moment-là, on ne peut pas traduire mot à mot, ce qu'on faisait dans le passé. De plus en plus, on est sensibilisé à ça et les gens nous aident à nous donner des traductions qui sont le reflet de notre culture.

M. Villeneuve: Il semblerait, dans un contexte un peu différent, que nous ayons une pénurie d'enseignants qui se spécialisent dans le français dans nos deux systèmes publics. Pourriez-vous commenter cela? Pour quelle raison avons-nous en ce moment une pénurie d'enseignants qualifiés pour enseigner le français dans notre système d'immersion ou dans nos systèmes actuels? Pouvez-vous commenter cela?

M. Sincennes: Si je le peux, à moins qu'il n'y ait quelqu'un d'autre. Je pense qu'en ce qui concerne les enseignants, il faut être bien conscient qu'actuellement, à Toronto, où on a un

très grand besoin d'enseignants, le coût de la vie est très élevé et les salaires sont comparables à ceux d'Ottawa. C'est une question pratique, une question de marché. Donc, les gens s'en vont à d'autres régions, souvent à la région où ils ont été élevés, dans l'immersion, et vous savez bien que les Franco-Ontariens forment des enseignants qui enseignent dans les écoles d'immersion de plus en plus.

Par contre, je ne connais pas la solution, Monsieur Villeneuve, comment régler tout ça, mais je sais bien que de m'en venir à Toronto demain matin, ce n'est pas alléchant. Donc, il va falloir, à un moment donné, que les Franco-Ontariens qui sont à Toronto soient desservis également, et ça prendra des sommes additionnelles pour ces gens-là.

Mme Soucie: Je pense que la pénurie de professeurs capables d'enseigner en français est quand même illusoire si on pense aux écoles françaises. Cette pénurie existe justement parce que les écoles d'immersion viennent s'alimenter à même la formation des maîtres de l'Université d'Ottawa et de l'Université Laurentienne pour des enseignants qui enseigneront dans les écoles d'immersion.

Il est évident que si le programme d'immersion a la réussite qu'il a, c'est effectivement parce que, dans la plupart des cas, ce sont des francophones qui enseignent le français aux anglophones. Mais actuellement dans la province, ces enseignants sont formés dans les lieux de formation des maîtres de nos deux universités bilingues, et il y a à peine dix ans, ces enseignants étaient uniquement orientés vers le système d'enseignement français pour les francophones. C'est donc ce qui crée actuellement cette illusion de pénurie de maîtres aptes à enseigner en français dans les écoles de langue française.

M. Villeneuve: Alors pour vous, c'est plus illusoire que réel.

Mme Soucie: Actuellement, à cause de cet unique bassin duquel s'alimentent deux systèmes, le système d'immersion et le système d'enseignement français.

M. Sincennes: Si vous me permettez, Madame la Présidente, il y a aussi un autre facteur touchant les enseignants dans le système catholique. Ce système-là était quand même désavantagé, surtout au niveau secondaire, et actuellement, comme on a décidé de financer le système davantage, bien là, il y a de plus en plus d'emplois, donc une pénurie. On comprend pourquoi le gouvernement a décidé de ne pas renouveler la clause qui laissait les enseignants se

retirer avec une préretraite, c'est parce qu'on pense qu'on va en manquer. Il fut un temps où ce n'était pas le cas, mais actuellement, c'est un fait. On va manquer d'enseignants parce qu'on a de plus en plus d'emplois. Quand nous aurons les fonds pour avoir des écoles équipées en ressources humaines d'une façon adéquate, il y aura un manque d'enseignants.

M. Villeneuve: Merci.

M. Adams: Je vous remercie beaucoup aussi pour votre philosophie de l'éducation en français. Dans la culture française, quelle est l'importance du concept des conseils scolaires de langue française?

Mme Soucie: Ce concept est tout à fait primordial. Il est à la base de ce qui est en train de s'échafauder dans l'éducation française en Ontario: l'importance de la gestion des écoles françaises par des francophones pour les francophones. J'extrapolerais jusqu'à la demande que l'AFCSCO véhicule présentement, l'association des conseils scolaires, qui demande une structure autonome, parallèle, au sein même du ministère de l'Éducation, pour gérer l'enseignement en français dans la province. Si on considère, comme la Loi 8 le dit, qu'en éducation, le français est une langue officielle en Ontario, ce principe de base doit se refléter à tous les échelons de la salle de classe par rapport à l'élève, jusqu'à tous ceux qui pensent et planifient l'éducation de cet enfant francophone dans la salle de classe.

M. Adams: Je sais que c'est tout à fait différent des écoles d'immersion.

Mme Soucie: Absolument.

M. Adams: Je crois que, par suite de la Loi 109, nous n'avons qu'un seul conseil comme celui-là en ce moment, n'est-ce pas?

Mme Soucie: Oui.

M. Adams: Combien en faudrait-il pour créer un système qui donne l'égalité aux élèves francophones?

Mme Soucie: Combien faudrait-il d'élèves?

M. Adams: Non, de conseils comme celui-là.

Mme Soucie: Il en faudrait partout pour couvrir tout le territoire de la province. Idéalement, c'est ce que la population francophone désirerait. On sait très bien que le gouvernement provincial procède par étapes; on sait que le ministre de l'Éducation (M. Ward) a dit lui-même que le conseil scolaire de langue française d'Ottawa-Carleton servirait de modèle pour la création d'autres conseils scolaires.

Il faut se rappeler que le jugement de la Cour d'appel de l'Ontario, rendu en 1984, si ma mémoire est bonne, a bien dit qu'en ce qui concerne la gestion, il ne faut pas s'en tenir au territoire actuel au sein des conseils scolaires. La province est actuellement divisée en un certain nombre de conseils scolaires. Dans certains cas, ces conseils scolaires comptent à peine quelques élèves francophones; dans certains cas, ils doivent même acheter de l'enseignement à des conseils scolaires voisins. Il est évident que dans ces régions-là, on ne parlerait pas d'un conseil scolaire. Il s'agirait donc de refaire la carte territoriale des conseils scolaires de la province, tel qu'on l'a fait, par exemple, au Nouveau-Brunswick, pour créer des entités, des conseils scolaires qui soient raisonnables du point de vue du nombre d'élèves et d'écoles à desservir.

M. Adams: Certains ont dit que la structure du conseil d'Ottawa-Carleton est trop difficile pour le reste de la province. Avez-vous des opinions sur ça?

M. Sincennes: Je prends la région d'Ottawa-Carleton et je me dis que déjà, là, on a fait une nouvelle carte géographique de ce conseil scolaire-là. Dans ce conseil scolaire, il y aura trois ou quatre conseils anglophones puis un conseil francophone, et la province devra s'adapter un petit peu comme ça. Il est certain que, devant de nouveaux changements, on est toujours un peu inquiet. Mais je vois facilement, dans le sud de la province, un grand conseil qui regrouperait les francophones. Je pense que madame est en fait aussi capable que moi, car elle a travaillé au niveau politique là-dedans, et je ne pense pas qu'il doive y avoir une multitude de conseils de langue française, à mon avis, mais il va y en avoir pour desservir toute la province.

1430

Mme Soucie: Je suis d'accord avec vous que la formule est complexe. Une gestion conjointe, on sait ce que ça veut dire. Actuellement, on a une gestion conjointe avec les conseils de l'enseignement en langue française, l'expérience des conseils d'éducation en langue française, qui cohabitent au sein de conseils scolaires majoritairement anglophones. C'est une forme de cohabitation et c'est difficile. Ce que nous allons tenter comme expérience, ce sera la cohabitation de secteurs séparés et publics mais d'une même langue. Donc, il y a des choses en commun et il y a des choses exclusives, et il est évident que l'expérience des prochaines années dictera l'évolution du dossier de la gestion.

M. Adams: Je vous remercie.

Mme Gratton: Je pense qu'il y a quelque chose qu'il faudrait ajouter à ce qu'on vient de dire, et c'est que le modèle d'Ottawa-Carleton n'est pas nécessairement le modèle qui devrait être appliqué partout dans la province. Quand on parle de conseils scolaires de langue française, on ne parle pas seulement du modèle à deux sections, comme celui qu'on prévoit pour Ottawa-Carleton; il y a des régions de la province où ça ne pourrait pas fonctionner, ce genre-là. Également, comme on l'a dit, la carte électorale doit être complètement refaite.

Mais ce que les associations, avec l'AFCSO, demandent au gouvernement depuis quelques mois, c'est de mettre sur pied une commission de gestion de l'éducation française en Ontario qui étudierait la situation dans chacun des cas pour pouvoir proposer au gouvernement une loi globale. Plutôt que d'avoir à faire une nouvelle loi chaque fois qu'on fait un conseil scolaire de langue française, plutôt que de réinventer un modèle différent puis de refaire une nouvelle loi, qu'on puisse avoir une loi globale avec différentes sortes d'applications, une loi qui permettra aux gens de passer de la Loi 75 — qui est loin d'être adéquate et ne répond pas du tout aux besoins des francophones pour le moment, qui répond partiellement aux besoins — pour se rendre à des conseils qui vont mieux répondre aux besoins régionaux, communautaires et provinciaux.

Alors, il serait très important que cette commission que nous demandons depuis un certain temps soit mise sur pied aussitôt que possible. Il y a beaucoup d'inquiétude dans la population présentement face à toute cette question de la gestion de langue française. Les gens sont inquiets et je pense qu'on devrait les rassurer de cette façon-là.

M. Adams: Je vous remercie.

M. Villeneuve: Comme question complémentaire à cette réponse, le conseil scolaire de langue française d'Ottawa-Carleton ne serait pas nécessairement la grande ligne de conduite pour d'autres conseils scolaires, mais je m'inquiète un peu de la façon dont celui-ci a été instauré et du fait qu'il semble être établi sans fonds, sans financement. Pourriez-vous nous suggérer peut-être la façon dont vous voyez la chose se dérouler? Il semblerait que la façon d'obtenir ces fonds pour le conseil scolaire de langue française d'Ottawa-Carleton soit complètement... je ne sais pas d'où proviennent les fonds, de quelle façon les fonds vont être... Pouvez-vous nous indiquer un petit peu ce que vous voyez là-dedans?

Mme Soucie: Il est évident que les francophones n'étaient pas satisfaits du projet de loi tel qu'il a été présenté, et ils ont dit en comité parlementaire, d'ailleurs, qu'ils auraient préféré que le financement soit présenté d'une façon plus stable et plus permanente. Ce qu'on voit actuellement pour le conseil de langue française d'Ottawa-Carleton, c'est un financement intérimaire, ad hoc, à partir d'un nouveau modèle que le gouvernement s'engage à financer adéquatement.

Maintenant, la formule n'est pas développée. Bien sûr, c'est lié à une étude beaucoup plus globale de l'accès à la taxe industrielle et commerciale, un document très complexe sur lequel le Comité devra sûrement se pencher dans les recommandations qu'il voudra faire au gouvernement.

M. Villeneuve: Merci.

M. Sincennes: Si vous me permettez, Madame la Présidente, justement en ce qui concerne le financement, quand on regarde le système d'autrefois, les catholiques étaient dans des conseils scolaires, les francophones et les anglophones, et les anglophones étaient dans deux autres conseils scolaires. Donc, il y avait des choses qu'on ne savait pas.

Mais dans le conseil de langue française, on sait que les francophones seront traités d'une façon différente, qu'ils soient catholiques ou qu'ils soient dans les écoles publiques. Ce sera encore plus évident parce que là on va être dans le même conseil scolaire et qu'il va y avoir, chez nous en tout cas, une différence de presque 1000! par élève. Cela ne pourra pas rester comme ça si on veut essayer d'atteindre les buts inscrits dans le document qui m'a été remis. Il y a des buts qui disent qu'on va donner la chance à tout le monde, mais on va leur donner moins de revenu. Je regarde, entre autres, celui qui parle d'éducation physique. L'enfant devrait être en bonne forme, et plusieurs de nos écoles n'ont même pas de gymnase. Comment est-ce qu'on fait ça?

Moi, je suis confiant, mais il ne faut pas penser que ça va se faire sans heurts. Il va y avoir des changements; puis, à un moment donné, ça va faire mal de part et d'autre. Mais si on veut atteindre les buts, il va falloir qu'on ait les mécanismes pour y arriver.

M. R. F. Johnston: Merci. Cela me donne aussi l'occasion de pratiquer mon français. C'est bon pour moi et j'espère que mes questions seront claires.

Premièrement, je veux vous remercier pour votre présentation, surtout à cause de votre

attention aux buts collectifs, non seulement aux buts individuels. Nous avons une longue liste de treize buts dans le développement personnel de chaque élève, mais si on juge de notre système d'éducation uniquement en fonction de ces buts-là, il sera impossible de dire que les élèves francophones sont bien servis.

J'aime bien votre exemple de quelques autres buts qui parlent de la collectivité. Dans ce cas, il s'agit de la collectivité d'une nation fondatrice, mais on peut en parler d'autres aussi: les autochtones, les buts des autres groupes dans la province. Il est très important de parler de ça.

Mais finalement, il y a une question. Est-il important d'avoir des buts si ces buts ne reflètent pas la réalité? À votre avis, comment devons-nous formuler les buts? en deux sections: les buts individuels et les buts collectifs ensemble, un peu comme vous l'avez fait? Il est nécessaire d'avoir une méthode pour vérifier le fonctionnement quotidien du système, car sans ça, nous avons une très bonne liste mais faisons face à la réalité que les enfants des familles pauvres n'iront jamais aux écoles postsecondaires, par exemple. Comment pouvons-nous redévelopper nos buts pour le système d'éducation?

Mme Soucie: Je vais répondre pour moi-même. Peut-être que mes collègues pourraient renchérir là-dessus.

Premièrement, je pense que tout but individuel s'insère quand même dans un but collectif. Plutôt que d'avoir deux séries, la poursuite de buts qui visent spécifiquement le développement individuel et, à côté ou en dessous, des buts collectifs, il vaut mieux insérer l'un dans l'autre et s'assurer que le développement individuel de l'enfant se fera à l'intérieur de buts plus globaux qui s'adressent effectivement à la collectivité à laquelle ils se rattachent; et cela autant pour l'élève autochtone que pour l'élève affilié à un groupe ethnique et qui s'inscrit, par exemple, à l'apprentissage d'une langue ethnique, et autant que l'élève anglophone, qui appartient à la majorité, s'insère, lui, dans ce groupe majoritaire provincial. Donc, mon choix personnel, ce serait vraiment de marier l'élément individuel et l'élément collectif dans des buts globaux de l'éducation.

Bien sûr, pour répondre à la deuxième partie de votre question, il faut s'assurer qu'il y a un mécanisme de contrôle et d'évaluation, que tous les conseils scolaires qui ont actuellement la pleine liberté sont aptes à formuler leur propres buts, qu'il y a une méthode pour évaluer si les programmes qu'on développe, les aptitudes qu'on privilégie, etc., s'insèrent ou non à

l'intérieur de ces buts qui auront été définis. Alors, comme tout bon élève finit l'année par une forme d'évaluation, je pense que tout conseil scolaire ou tout système d'éducation aussi, après une phase, devrait subir une forme de contrôle et d'évaluation pour voir si ce qui se fait dans l'école est effectivement en relation directe avec les buts globaux sur lesquels on se sera entendus en ce qui concerne la philosophie et les buts de l'éducation.

1440

M. Sincennes: Je suis d'accord avec madame. Je ne pense pas qu'il faille absolument mettre des buts à côté pour les francophones, mais il faut que les buts qui ont été écrits – je les ai revus ce matin en venant d'Ottawa – soient connus et qu'on regarde si, vraiment, on a atteint ces buts-là, si on a les ressources pour y arriver. Il faut qu'on regarde ça peut-être d'une façon plus régulière et que ça devienne presque un credo de tous les jours: on connaît les buts, puis tout ce qu'on fait est accroché aux buts qui ont été faits par nous. Je pense que, souvent, il y a probablement des parents qui ne savent même pas qu'il y a ces treize buts-là. Il serait peut-être important que, à un moment donné, les gens sachent que ça existe et qu'on y travaille, et qu'on dise: «Eh bien, vous avez décidé d'un tel but, mais on n'a pas les ressources pour atteindre ce but-là.» Voyez-vous, il faut que, à un moment donné, les gens puissent avoir des possibilités d'y arriver.

Donc, je ne pense pas qu'il faille absolument faire deux... je n'en voudrais pas. D'ailleurs, notre mémoire le dit: nous sommes Ontariens, nous sommes francophones, nous sommes Franco-Ontariens, puis nous voulons rester comme ça. Donc, nous voulons avoir un système qui va nous permettre de nous développer et de grandir, au bénéfice de la province de l'Ontario.

M. R. F. Johnston: Ce que vous proposez, c'est un peu en contradiction avec ce que disent les autres groupes qui sont venus plus tôt. Ils disent qu'il faut diminuer le nombre de buts, être moins précis et dire que les buts ne sont pas si importants. Il y a d'autres groupes, comme le dernier avant vous, qui disent qu'il est très important, dans les écoles, de parler, par exemple, de sexisme, de parler du système d'éducation comme une méthode pour prévenir la violence familiale, et même de dresser une plus longue liste de ces questions-là. Il nous est difficile de choisir entre les deux concepts.

Mme Soucie: Ma réaction à cela serait que les buts devraient demeurer globaux. Je ne vois pas que, dans un effort de réflexion philosophique

sur les buts de l'éducation, on devrait commencer à énumérer de façon très précise tout ce que l'éducation est censée faire auprès de la population de nos enfants.

Maintenant, cela dit, les buts globaux doivent permettre aux Franco-Ontariens de s'y retrouver comme collectivité. Alors, si on peut faire l'exercice, par exemple à la page cinq du texte qu'on vous a remis, le deuxième but mentionné ici: «Développer une connaissance, une compréhension et un attachement à la culture française et à sa langue maternelle», ce but que nous suggérons, qui est d'une certaine spécificité, pourrait être pris dans un énoncé plus global qui pourrait convenir à la fois à certains groupes ethniques, au groupe majoritaire et au groupe minoritaire que nous sommes. Donc, ce que nous voulons, c'est de nous retrouver dans ces buts, d'y retrouver notre spécificité, mais ça peut être énoncé en termes beaucoup plus génériques que spécifiques.

M. R. F. Johnston: Merci. J'ai une dernière question en ce qui concerne la gestion. Je suis d'accord que la gestion est très importante pour garantir les buts dont vous avez parlé, mais chaque fois que je lis des articles en français sur la gestion, le contrôle des Franco-Ontariens de leur propre système, je n'y vois jamais d'argument ou de discours concernant le rôle de la famille, le rôle de la communauté locale dans cette gestion; je n'y vois qu'une plus grande idée de la communauté franco-ontarienne. Dans le système anglais, il y a beaucoup de problèmes maintenant, en ce sens que les familles manquent de pouvoir sur l'éducation de leurs élèves, et il y a l'idée qu'il est très important que les parents, les enseignants et les élèves ensemble, comme communauté, contrôlent chaque école. J'aimerais entendre peut-être quelques idées et réponses sur l'idée de la gestion et du contrôle.

Mme Soucie: J'aimerais mieux que la réponse vienne d'un représentant de la Fédération des API. Assurément, si ces gens étaient présents aujourd'hui, ils voudraient aussi souligner l'importance de la famille, car quand on parle de culture franco-ontarienne, il est évident que le premier lieu de développement de cette culture, c'est au sein de la famille, et la famille franco-ontarienne s'attend que l'école reprenne l'enfant là où elle l'a conduit et complète ce que la famille a fait.

Par contre – et là, c'est peut-être aussi une différence de mentalité – les conseillers scolaires francophones, je pense, ont toujours senti un poids énorme sur leurs épaules en leur qualité de représentants des familles dans la gestion des

écoles. Peut-être qu'il y a une différence, effectivement, dans les mentalités et que c'est le conseiller scolaire, en liaison avec les parents, bien sûr, qui, lui, se fait le porte-parole des familles, au sein du conseil scolaire, auprès des pédagogues professionnels qui développent la programmation dans les écoles.

Alors, c'est une suggestion. Je ne sais pas si Ginette aurait autre chose à dire.

Mme Gratton: Oui. Je pense que ce qui arrive en Ontario, à cause de notre situation minoritaire, c'est que l'école est vraiment le centre, le cœur de la vie française. Cela ne se retrouve pas ailleurs; il n'y a pas d'autre endroit où on parle français tout le temps, sauf à l'école. Et même pour plusieurs enfants, à la maison ils parlent anglais généralement et ils se disent francophones.

Le français, c'est la langue de l'école, malheureusement. Il faut que ça change, il faut qu'on retrouve de plus en plus de français ailleurs; mais l'école est le cœur de la vie française. Alors, à cause de ça, tout tourne autour de l'école et il semblerait que la responsabilité communautaire repose, comme Rolande le disait, sur les épaules des conseillers scolaires, des enseignants de l'école, du directeur de l'école, etc.

Avec la Loi 75, on assiste à un grand rapprochement entre les conseillers scolaires de langue française et la communauté: les parents, les enseignants, les directeurs d'école, les surintendants. Les gens travaillent beaucoup ensemble. On voit de plus en plus de comités d'excellence se former, des comités d'excellence composés non seulement de conseillers scolaires et de gens dans le domaine de l'éducation mais de gens qui sont dans à peu près tous les domaines.

Il est certain que la dynamique communautaire chez les francophones n'est pas du tout la même que celle chez les anglophones, et ça va prendre beaucoup de décennies pour que l'école ne soit plus le centre de la vie française en Ontario. Cela va rester comme ça jusqu'à ce que les francophones se sentent vraiment à l'aise; d'où l'importance d'avoir parmi les buts de l'éducation toute la dimension communautaire et collective.

Par exemple, le but numéro huit dit qu'on doit apprendre à résoudre seul les problèmes pratiques de la vie quotidienne. Eh bien, peut-être que c'est vrai pour certaines personnes, mais en général on résout mieux les problèmes à deux ou à plusieurs que seul; d'autant plus pour les francophones, puisque les problèmes ne sont pas les mêmes. Alors, c'est à cause de choses comme

ça que les Franco-Ontariens aimeraient y ajouter tout l'aspect collectif et communautaire que vous avez mentionné.

M. R. F. Johnston: Je pense que c'est une bonne distinction.

1450

Mrs. O'Neill: Madam Soucie has been making presentations in my presence for a long time. Her talents have increased with the years.

I found that very interesting, your last distinction as well. Having served with francophone trustees, I think that is a very good judgement.

There were only two things I wanted to mention. I wanted to verify what seems to have had many interpretations just in your little panel today. I think the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward) has stated that the Ottawa-Carleton French-language school board is not a model for the whole province. I want to make that comment and say that very clearly. I think we realize it is to serve the francophones of Ottawa-Carleton and has been built that way.

The other areas of the province may develop entirely differently. I think, as we discussed it today, we saw that that may be the case. So we would not want any other area of the province to think we were going to impose that particular bill, so to speak, on their situation. That is why we want to continue to have very active discussions with the other areas of the province to see what will be best for the needs there.

The gentleman has left. He made one statement that maybe one of you can explain a little more fully, which is building of the separate schools. That seems to be where the growth is now. I think he said that, and I really did not know what he meant by that. Maybe neither of you can explain that. I know I am taking it out of context, but when he was talking about it he was answering Mr. Villeneuve. He was suggesting areas and he said it could not be done without money. I could not really get the implications about the building of the separate schools.

Ms. Soucie: I think he was alluding to the fact that in the case of the francophone school board for the Ottawa-Carleton area, within the same school board you will have pupils within the separate school group generating a certain amount per pupil and within the public school group they will be generating another amount.

Mrs. O'Neill: Right. OK.

Ms. Soucie: So there is some injustice that is becoming more evident there within the same school board where a head is not worth a head.

Mrs. O'Neill: Thank you. I am sure that was what he was talking about.

Ms. Soucie: Yes.

Mrs. O'Neill: I am sorry. I have to leave at this moment to return to Ottawa, but I am very happy I was here for this much of your presentation.

Madam Chairman: I think you may be taking the same flight as Mr. Sincennes, because he mentioned he had to leave earlier for a flight to Ottawa as well.

Mrs. O'Neill: That might be true. I guess I am cutting it a little finer than he did.

Madam Chairman: One final question from Mr. Villeneuve.

M. Villeneuve: Merci, Madame la Présidente. Encore une fois, je voudrais entendre vos commentaires, inévitablement, sur le rapport Radwanski, qui aura une certaine influence sur le Comité spécial de l'éducation. Pourriez-vous nous dire un petit peu ce que vous voyez dans le rapport Radwanski, comment il touche notre francophonie ici, en Ontario?

Mme Gratton: Écoutez, nous n'avons pas regardé Radwanski avant d'arriver. C'est axé surtout sur l'individu, je crois, sur le but de l'épanouissement individuel. Ce que les Franco-Ontariens désireraient, c'est de voir l'épanouissement de l'individu dans une communauté et l'épanouissement d'une communauté, sans laisser de côté l'épanouissement individuel.

M. Villeneuve: Une collectivité.

Mme Gratton: L'épanouissement d'une collectivité, pour le bien d'une province. Pour nous, c'est très important, c'est même une question de survie.

M. Villeneuve: J'apprécie ce que vous avez mentionné tout à l'heure. L'école, chez nos Ontariens d'expression française, est bel et bien le cœur de la vie française en Ontario, et puis ça se produit chez moi, comme ça se produit probablement chez beaucoup d'Ontariens d'expression française: l'école est bel et bien le noyau français. La famille soutient, appuie; par contre, l'école est toujours l'endroit où circule le noyau complet. Je crois que vous avez très bien expliqué la situation, et c'est d'une importance majeure dans nos écoles françaises que de continuer cet enchaînement qui est tellement essentiel pour la continuité. Merci.

Mme Gratton: Merci.

Mme la Présidente: Madame Soucie et Madame Gratton, merci d'avoir participé aux discussions du Comité aujourd'hui.

Ms. Soucie: Might I add just a small thing?

Madam Chairman: Certainly.

Ms. Soucie: Our presentation today dealt specifically with the aims, objectives and philosophy of education, whereas in the questioning we did go into more specifics. We will be presenting a brief again that will develop much further these specifics. We will be very happy to discuss the management and control of schools, for example, much further with your committee, probably some time this autumn; so we will be coming back.

Madam Chairman: We very much appreciate it. Thank you for coming today. For a change, we are just ever so slightly ahead of time.

The next group to appear before us is the Fédération des élèves du secondaire franco-ontarien. I do not know if you are ready. Mr. Dumais, I understand you are here and all ready to go.

FÉDÉRATION DES ÉLÈVES DU SECONDAIRE FRANCO-ONTARIEN

M. Dumais: Nous avons préparé un document, qui est, malgré tout, très court, au sujet de la philosophie de l'éducation. Je dis qu'il est très court, car il est un peu malheureux pour la FESFO de ne pas avoir eu le temps de consulter nos membres, les élèves du secondaire, comme on l'aurait souhaité. Cependant, je suis bien content que le gouvernement prenne le temps de consulter la population, en l'occurrence la Fédération, sur cette question-là.

Je me donne la peine de dire cela justement parce qu'il y a deux points principaux qui font l'objet de ma présentation. Le premier point, c'est la consultation qui devrait être faite auprès des jeunes chaque fois que l'on élabore un programme quelconque qui va se dérouler dans une école. En fait, ce qu'on remarque, c'est que, dans l'élaboration même des programmes ou dans l'évaluation de ces programmes-là – les programmes académiques, j'entends – il y a très peu de consultation auprès des jeunes eux-mêmes, qui sont, finalement, les principaux intéressés. Ce sont eux qui vont bénéficier de l'apprentissage qu'on veut proposer. Il sera beaucoup plus facile pour les élèves d'assimiler la matière s'ils ont déjà participé, au départ, à l'élaboration des objectifs. Je pense qu'il serait plus facile pour les professeurs aussi de préciser ce que sont les besoins des élèves.

Je pense que nous avons un système d'éducation qui tente de répondre assez bien au marché du travail. On veut former des jeunes qui seront en mesure de trouver un emploi et puis de

contribuer quelque chose à la société, éventuellement. Mais si on ne tient pas compte de leurs besoins spécifiques, ils ont des intérêts très particuliers bien souvent, et ces intérêts ne sont pas nécessairement incompatibles avec des objectifs plus généraux.

Je ne sais pas si les gens ici ont le document en question. Je n'ai pas vraiment envie de le lire. Je veux juste vous donner les grandes lignes de ce document-là.

M. Villeneuve: Il serait préférable de le lire pour que ce soit inscrit dans le Hansard.

M. Dumais: D'accord. Alors, je vais procéder comme ça, puis je vais peut-être faire des apâtés.

M. Villeneuve: Ce n'est pas tellement long.

M. Dumais: Non, il n'est pas très long, en effet.

Alors, j'ai dit que, dans le contexte actuel, le système d'éducation de l'Ontario tente bel et bien de préparer l'élève au marché du travail. La dimension académique de l'école contemporaine est intégrée dans une évolution progressive mais timide et incertaine. Les programmes d'enseignement sont développés, étudiés, expérimentés sur le terrain; ensuite, ils sont révisés, expérimentés de nouveau; puis ils sont poursuivis ou simplement abandonnés.

Dans tout ce processus, dont l'objectif fondamental demeure, semble-t-il, la qualité de l'enseignement ou le désir d'offrir à la jeunesse de cette province la meilleure éducation possible, il est tout de même rarissime que l'on consulte les principaux intéressés, c'est-à-dire les élèves.

Dans le développement des programmes ou des méthodes d'enseignement, dans l'élaboration du programme scolaire, l'opinion des jeunes apprenants contribuerait justement à une meilleure évaluation des objectifs. Une consultation bien soutenue susciterait davantage l'intérêt des jeunes, et les résultats qu'ils ou elles voudraient atteindre seraient en fonction, du moins en partie, de leurs propres attentes et seraient donc, en principe, meilleurs.

Non seulement la participation des élèves devrait alors se situer à l'étape de la mise en application des programmes, mais encore elle semble requise au moment de l'élaboration même de ces derniers. Dans sa définition des programmes académiques, le gouvernement doit consulter les élèves afin de préciser les besoins auxquels notre système d'éducation pourrait répondre.

Bien entendu, le système d'éducation se doit d'anticiper les besoins du marché du travail. Un gouvernement responsable souhaite faciliter

l'accès éventuel de tout citoyen à un emploi satisfaisant. Cependant, ces besoins bien concrets ne sont pas du tout incompatibles avec les désirs réels des élèves, leurs aspirations profondes et leurs besoins à la fois précis et variés en matière d'éducation et de formation.

1500

L'éducation reçue aux différents cycles s'oriente ainsi vers divers débouchés aptes à répondre aux besoins d'une société en constante évolution. L'école constituerait donc un simple bassin de futurs techniciens et travailleurs professionnels capables d'entretenir l'énorme machine sociale qu'est l'Ontario d'aujourd'hui.

Une telle optique, c'est justifiable; mais il manque à cette vision de l'éducation une dimension primordiale. Le jeune est éduqué: on lui apprend à lire, à écrire, à compter; on lui apprend même à exprimer sa pensée; on l'initie à la découverte et à la méthode. Nous investissons tous énormément de ressources afin d'assurer cette mesure du développement.

Avec raison, nous voulons éduquer des gens qui seront autonomes et polyvalents, nous voulons former des gens qui pourront se spécialiser et contribuer réellement à la société tout entière. Ce qui semble oublié dans toutes ces intentions, cependant, c'est effectivement la dimension sociale du milieu d'apprentissage. Les arts et les sciences sont d'une importance capitale, bien entendu. La formation sociale et culturelle l'est tout autant.

Ce qui permet à une communauté de se développer, c'est l'implication de chacun de ses membres. Ce qui distingue une école d'une autre, c'est l'atmosphère qu'on y crée par le biais d'activités sociales et culturelles. C'est cela, bien plus que les équipements ou le personnel qui s'y retrouvent, qui fait souvent la force d'une institution du point de vue de l'élève.

Ce qui limite l'implication sociale des jeunes, c'est le temps qu'ils peuvent consacrer à des activités en dehors des études et du travail. Ce que notre système d'éducation néglige depuis trop longtemps, c'est cette formation acquise dans le bénévolat et les activités parascolaires. Dans l'élaboration d'une philosophie nouvelle par rapport à l'éducation, le gouvernement doit tenir compte sincèrement du fait que la jeunesse apprend à plus d'un niveau et qu'en dehors de la famille et de la salle de classe, l'éducation se poursuit activement.

Pour développer une société, il faut encourager la participation. Dans notre système d'éducation, il faut élaborer une ou des façons affirmatives de créditer l'apprentissage social qui se fait

en dehors de la salle de classe. Trop souvent, puisque leur performance académique en souffre, on voit les jeunes meneurs abandonner leurs activités bénévoles au sein des différents comités. Cela limite forcément l'impact que les jeunes leaders peuvent avoir sur l'atmosphère d'une école. Tous les jeunes ne sont pas prêts ou même aptes à organiser des activités, mais tous peuvent y participer, et c'est l'effet multiplicateur de ceux et celles qui s'y impliquent qu'il faut soutenir.

C'est aussi l'apprentissage énorme que les élèves peuvent retirer de leurs expériences parascolaires qu'il faut reconnaître, leur contribution à la société immédiate qu'est l'école et leur contribution éventuelle à une société plus globale. Peu de gens vont s'y impliquer activement à l'âge adulte si on ne les a jamais encouragés à le faire auparavant. Trop souvent, le manque d'attention que l'on accorde à la formation dite parascolaire provoque une diminution remarquable de cet impact social pourtant recherché par notre système d'éducation.

Cela, c'est l'essence du texte que je vous ai remis. Je voudrais quand même mentionner le fait que cette réflexion ne s'adresse pas spécifiquement aux besoins des élèves francophones, c'est une philosophie qui doit être appliquée à tous les jeunes qui fréquentent une institution scolaire en Ontario spécifiquement, ou n'importe où dans le monde, à mon avis.

Mme la Présidente: Merci de votre présentation, Monsieur Dumais.

M. Dumais: Je vous en prie.

M. Villeneuve: Je trouve intéressant le fait que vous soulignez certaines choses qui ont déjà été soulignées par ceux qui ont fait des présentations auparavant, surtout l'idée de créditer l'apprentissage social qui se fait en dehors de la salle de classe. Pourriez-vous peut-être nous donner des exemples qui, selon vous, s'appliqueraient? Nous savons maintenant que nombre de choses que nous tenions peut-être pour acquises ont déjà besoin d'être expliquées et même d'être enseignées et que ce n'est pas nécessairement dans le cadre de la salle de classe que ça se fait. Alors, quelle façon voyez-vous, dans l'ensemble, de créditer ce qui se passe ailleurs qu'en classe?

M. Dumais: De quelle façon je vois comment on peut le créditer? Je pense qu'il s'agit tout simplement, d'une part, d'inciter les professeurs à encourager les jeunes à s'impliquer ailleurs et, d'autre part, peut-être de leur demander de trouver d'autres méthodes de notation, soit des travaux scolaires ou des examens.

Je peux vous donner un exemple très concret de ce qui se passe chez nous. Il y a une douzaine de jeunes qui font partie de notre conseil d'administration. Ces jeunes-là sont appelés à participer à cinq ou six réunions de la FESFO chaque année, en plus des activités régulières, les activités régionales ou les assemblées annuelles. Puis ce sont des jeunes qui font aussi beaucoup de représentations et qui vont se retrouver à l'Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario ou dans divers autres organismes.

Cela demande beaucoup de temps. Ils sont obligés d'aller passer une fin de semaine à Ottawa; ils sont obligés de voyager souvent en autocar de Kapuskasing à Ottawa; ils vont passer une journée en autocar, deux journées en réunion, puis une autre journée en autocar pour retourner. Ce qui fait qu'ils manquent quand même un certain nombre d'heures de classe, mais ils apprennent énormément d'un autre côté, pas nécessairement dans le domaine des mathématiques ou du français dans un sens très académique, mais ils apprennent beaucoup. Cela, je pense que vous l'avez reconnu.

Je crois qu'il est possible, avec un minimum de collaboration de la part des professeurs, de demander à ces élèves-là simplement de faire un compte rendu de ce qu'ils ont fait au cours de la réunion et peut-être de les noter là-dessus. Je pense que ça se fait déjà dans certaines écoles et que ça devrait être systématisé davantage.

C'est la même chose en ce qui concerne les jeunes qui participent à des comités de sport, qui organisent des tournois et qui vont y consacrer énormément d'heures bénévoles – ils en retirent beaucoup au point de vue de l'organisation, etc. – simplement pour en faire bénéficier leurs confrères de l'école. Étant donné tout le temps que ça demande, très souvent ça limite un petit peu le temps qu'ils peuvent consacrer aux études dans le sens plus conventionnel. Alors, je pense qu'il s'agit d'inciter les professeurs à reconnaître ça, puis de trouver des méthodes de notation différentes des méthodes plus traditionnelles.

M. Villeneuve: Méthodes qui seraient reconnues dans le bulletin, etc. Puis nous, en tant que parents peut-être, comme on dit, de la vieille école, nous croyons à certains moments que ça concurrence les études conventionnelles, que nos enfants n'auront pas le temps de faire les deux; mais par contre, comme vous le mentionnez, ils ou elles participent à quelque chose de très concret qui leur convient et qui génère beaucoup d'activité et de créativité. Quant à nous autres en tant que parents, je sais que souvent chez moi, on dit: «C'est assez d'activités parascolaires, il faut

faire les devoirs conventionnels ». Il est toujours moins drôle d'aller à ce qui est conventionnel que d'aller à une chose à laquelle ils veulent participer.

Alors, je crois que vous nous donnez un concept différent, un concept très acceptable auquel ce comité devra faire face et, peut-être, faire des recommandations de ce côté-là, du côté de la vie réelle en dehors du cadre scolaire.

M. Dumais: Si je peux me le permettre, évidemment on ne voudrait pas que les activités parascolaires remplacent les activités académiques traditionnelles. Mais ce que je mentionnais aussi dans le texte et qui était important, c'est que l'école n'est pas juste un lieu où on va apprendre un métier finalement, où on va aller chercher des outils qui vont faire qu'on pourra travailler un de ces jours. Il faut que ce soit le « fun », une école.

Puis l'atmosphère d'une école, c'est ce qui fait qu'on veut y aller et qu'on s'intéresse à l'apprentissage. Je pense qu'on peut attribuer la participation des jeunes à l'esprit de l'école. Si les jeunes n'ont pas la chance d'être reconnus pour tout le travail qu'ils y mettent, ils ne voudront pas y participer. Ils vont dire: « Il faut que j'aie mes 80 pour cent. Si je passe deux heures au comité de-ci de-là, je vais me retrouver avec une note de 75, puis ça ne fait pas tout à fait mon affaire ». Alors, les cinq points qui manquent, peut-être que les professeurs pourraient s'arranger pour les donner, les créditer aux heures bénévoles que l'élève a données.

Je parlais de l'effet multiplicateur. Eh bien, il y a toute une école qui bénéficie d'une activité de carnaval ou de quoi que ce soit, puis les élèves se disent: « C'est le "fun", mon école; c'est une belle école. Il y a de l'esprit et je veux y aller. Il y a des fois où on s'amuse, il y a des fois où on étudie; mais je suis toujours content de rentrer là le matin ».

1510

M. Villeneuve: À votre avis, Monsieur Dumais, est-ce que nos professeurs conventionnels actuels sont prêts à épanouir et à accepter cette philosophie, ou est-ce qu'ils ont une attitude négative à cet égard?

M. Dumais: Il y a certainement des réserves, puis je comprends les professeurs aussi. Comme je le disais tout à l'heure, ce ne sont pas tous les élèves qui sont aptes à faire les deux choses, à être bons du côté académique puis à se consacrer en même temps à différents comités ou à être membres de conseils d'administration ça et là. Alors, je comprends leurs réserves. D'une certaine façon, il faut systématiser ça; puis ça

s'adresse à des leaders, évidemment. Mais je pense que les profs, quand ils donnent un minimum d'encouragement, ils en voient les résultats.

Ce que je mentionnais aussi tout à l'heure, c'est que si ce n'est pas tout le monde qui peut organiser des activités, c'est certainement tous les élèves qui peuvent y participer. Malheureusement, il y a des endroits où on n'encourage pas une participation générale à toutes sortes d'activités. Il est déjà difficile d'encourager les élèves à s'organiser, car ça demande beaucoup de temps. Souvent, les élèves sont pris pour s'arranger seuls; ça, c'est déjà une chose difficile. Mais ce qui complique l'affaire, c'est quand les professeurs ne mettent même pas la main à la pâte quand il s'agit d'en faire la promotion et d'encourager l'ensemble d'une école à participer à une activité organisée par les plus jeunes.

M. Villeneuve: J'apprécie énormément votre participation comme représentant de la Fédération des élèves du secondaire franco-ontarien. Je voulais m'assurer, au tout début de ce comité, que la participation de nos élèves, de ceux pour qui le tout est fait, figurerait dans nos délibérations. Je crois que c'est leur participation, leurs idées qui vont réellement faire réussir les travaux de ce comité et, à la longue, c'est en leur nom que nous travaillons. Alors, je vous remercie infiniment.

Puis-je vous demander où se trouve les bureaux de votre fédération?

M. Dumais: Notre bureau est à Ottawa.

M. Villeneuve: À Ottawa.

M. Dumais: Oui.

M. Villeneuve: Et vous desservez les régions d'expression française partout dans la province?

M. Dumais: Oui. De fait, on touche presque 70 écoles secondaires françaises ou mixtes de l'Ontario.

Si je peux me le permettre, Monsieur Villeneuve, il reste un dernier commentaire qui touche à la participation des élèves à des conseils d'administration et à tout le tralala. À la lumière de la Loi 8, on sait que les services en français vont s'implanter un peu partout et qu'on va avoir besoin de la population francophone pour participer à toutes sortes de comités, que ce soit pour un hôpital, pour un centre de services sociaux — enfin, il y a des endroits en masse où on va solliciter la participation de notre population à des conseils d'administration.

Je l'ai dit tantôt, mais ça vaut la peine que je le répète, je pense: si on n'encourage pas nos jeunes à faire ça maintenant, pendant qu'ils sont à

l'école, je ne sais pas qui va le faire dans quelques années. Voilà.

M. Villeneuve: Merci infiniment.

M. Dumais: Merci de m'avoir écouté.

M. Villeneuve: Vous n'avez pas fini?

M. Dumais: Si vous n'avez pas d'autres questions...

Madam Chairman: I am not sure, we have just been joined by Mr. Beer and I noticed that he was reading through the brief. Our bilingual quotient has just gone up from four and a half to five and a half. Would you like to add yourself to the list of questioners?

M. Adams: Monsieur Dumais, je vous remercie. Vous avez dit que les opinions des élèves sont importantes à la santé du système d'éducation, je crois. Je suis d'accord jusqu'à un certain point, mais je crois qu'on peut dire que les opinions des étudiants qui ont des problèmes dans le système sont très importantes, peut-être plus importantes que celles des autres, car les autres, en un sens, ont accepté le système. Pouvez-vous nous suggérer où on pourrait échantillonner les opinions des étudiants qui ont des problèmes dans le système?

M. Dumais: Je pense que dans chaque école on les reconnaît. Il y a aussi des programmes comme l'Avenir, où on demande aux jeunes décrocheurs de retourner à l'école, puis on leur offre un salaire pour étudier à temps partiel et travailler à temps partiel. Ces jeunes-là, s'ils ont décroché une première fois, il y avait certainement des raisons. Ces programmes-là sont quand même très intéressants; je pense que ce sont de bonnes initiatives pour essayer de récupérer les jeunes qui ont décroché.

Cela, c'est un endroit où on peut aller les chercher. Il y a aussi tous les centres de jeunes, finalement, où on va les retrouver en dehors de l'école. S'ils ne sont pas vraiment heureux à l'école, je pense qu'ils vont sortir, et puis là, il faut les retrouver quelque part dans la communauté. À ce moment-là, ce n'est peut-être plus le système d'éducation, c'est beaucoup plus le système social qui touche ces gens-là. On pourrait parler de différents ministères ici.

Je pense que l'un des programmes qu'il serait intéressant d'évaluer, c'est l'Avenir et les gens qui participent au programme l'Avenir. Il serait intéressant d'aller chez eux chercher à savoir pourquoi ils ont décroché, pourquoi ils reviennent ou ne reviennent pas.

M. Adams: C'est bien. Je vous remercie.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Adams. Mr. Johnston.

M. R. F. Johnston: Monsieur Dumais, je pense que vous avez répondu à presque toutes mes questions, mais je veux demander si vous parlez d'un très grand changement, d'un bouleversement de notre système d'éducation: d'un concept pédagogique qui veut l'implication des élèves dans les décisions concernant leur éducation et aussi une idée plus large des questions que celle qu'on a seulement dans la salle de classe; ou si vous voulez tout simplement ajouter une sorte de consultation ou offrir plus de possibilités aux élèves de ce côté-là.

Il y a une différence. Il y a une pédagogie qui parle de l'implication des élèves dans toutes les décisions, et ça change la balance des pouvoirs dans la hiérarchie de l'école, dans le système d'éducation. Parlez-vous de ça ou seulement de petites consultations avec les élèves?

M. Dumais: Je ne crois pas que ce soit réaliste de penser remettre la totalité de la responsabilité de l'éducation entre les mains des élèves. Ce dont je me rends compte, par contre, c'est que chaque fois qu'on leur donne un certain nombre de décisions à prendre par rapport aux objectifs à fixer, ces objectifs sont beaucoup plus faciles à atteindre parce que ce sont les élèves eux-mêmes, c'est le jeune lui-même qui décide: «Moi, je veux me rendre à tel point». Il peut en discuter assez facilement avec son professeur, qui essaie de penser à une méthode concrète en début d'année, où on a un programme d'études. Le prof dit: «Bon, on a X chapitres à étudier d'ici le mois de juin. Comment voulez-vous procéder pour les étudier? On peut se donner un objectif: on pourrait avoir fait les dix premiers chapitres d'ici le mois de décembre. Est-ce que ça fait votre affaire? Il y en a, je ne sais pas, moi, 100 ou 200 pages. Pensez-vous qu'on puisse passer au travers de tout ça?»

Là, l'élève peut dire: «C'est beaucoup. On pourrait peut-être se contenter de faire huit chapitres et d'en faire un peu plus après». Je pense qu'avec un peu d'encadrement, ils pourront décider ensemble. Mais il y a quand même des objectifs à atteindre qui devront être déterminés. Je parlais du marché du travail. L'élève n'est pas toujours en mesure d'évaluer les outils qu'il va lui falloir pour éventuellement s'inscrire à des études postsecondaires.

Ce qu'on pourrait ajouter à ça aussi, c'est l'évaluation même des programmes. Je pense que c'est là que l'«input» des élèves va être le plus important, car ils sont quand même souvent jeunes et il leur est difficile de déterminer des objectifs précis. Par contre, à la fin de l'année ils sont en mesure de dire: «Bon voilà, on a passé

au travers de toute cette matière-là et là-dedans on juge qu'il y avait des choses très intéressantes qu'on aurait aimé approfondir et qu'il y avait d'autres choses, moins intéressantes, et on pense que ça ne nous servira jamais et on se demande pourquoi on nous a fait apprendre ça». C'est aux deux niveaux que l'«input» peut se faire, et je pense que ça se fait dans un processus de consultations ponctuelles mais régulières et non pas en remettant l'entière responsabilité de l'éducation aux élèves. Je ne pense pas que ce soit mon propos.

1520

M. R. F. Johnston: Non. Ce sont les limites que j'aimerais connaître, car il y a des écoles maintenant, surtout au niveau élémentaire, où les enfants participent aux décisions sur la manière d'apprendre, et ils apprennent collectivement. C'est une sorte d'éducation populaire; on l'utilise dans le tiers monde. Je veux juste savoir si vous voulez aller dans cette direction, ou si vous voulez voir la sorte d'évolution dont vous avez parlé tantôt.

M. Dumais: Non, je crois que les élèves sont encore ouverts à l'idée d'être relativement dirigés dans leurs études. Si on regarde la moyenne des jeunes aujourd'hui, ils ne savent pas vraiment ce qu'ils vont faire plus tard. Alors, il faut leur demander: «Qu'est-ce que tu veux faire? Ce sera quoi, ta profession, ton métier?» Ils sont en douzième année; très souvent, ils n'ont pas encore décidé.

Il serait assez embêtant de leur demander: «Qu'est-ce que tu veux étudier?» à partir de la première année ou de la huitième année, peu importe. Je pense que ce serait embêtant, qu'eux-mêmes seraient embêtés de le faire. Ils pourraient dire: «Moi, les mathématiques et la chimie, je n'aime pas ça. Je veux faire juste du dessin, de la photo, etc.», enfin, ce qui leur plaît. Ils sont capables de comprendre l'importance de certains cours. C'est juste dans la méthode d'enseignement et dans le processus par lequel on passe au travers d'une matière qu'ils peuvent être impliqués: la façon dont c'est enseigné; la façon dont c'est évalué aussi: est-ce qu'ils préfèrent être évalués dans un travail, un examen écrit, un discours?

Enfin, en tout ça, les profs doivent consulter les élèves avant de choisir l'option finale; puis ça peut varier d'une école à une autre, d'une classe à une autre.

M. R. F. Johnston: D'accord. Merci.

M. Beer: Excusez-moi de n'avoir pas été ici au début lorsque vous avez présenté votre mémoire, mais j'ai eu le temps de le lire.

J'ai deux questions. D'abord, il me semble toujours que, chez les francophones de la province, l'école joue un rôle culturel et un rôle social plus importants que chez les anglophones, pour beaucoup de raisons. Plus on s'éloigne d'Ottawa ou de Sudbury, plus l'école devient vraiment non pas simplement le centre d'éducation mais le centre culturel et peut-être aussi un centre social. Donc, à mon sens, l'étudiant francophone, surtout au niveau secondaire, voit l'école peut-être d'un point de vue un peu différent de celui de son collègue anglophone, que ce soit à Toronto, à Chatham ou ailleurs. En développant la thèse dont vous parlez ici, pensez-vous que, jusqu'à un certain point, il y a une différence, en ce sens que pour les Franco-Ontariens, l'école devrait jouer sinon un rôle différent de celui des écoles anglophones, certainement un rôle plus social et plus culturel?

M. Dumais: La FESFO appuie le groupe qui a comparu juste avant nous; je pense que c'était déjà dans leur présentation. Pour les Franco-Ontariens, l'école n'a pas tout à fait le même rôle que pour les anglophones. C'est le milieu où tout va se dérouler au point de vue culturel. Si ça ne se passe pas à l'école, ça pourrait se passer dans la famille; mais la famille, il reste qu'elle est de moins en moins présente à mesure que notre jeune avance dans le système d'éducation. Alors, il est évident qu'elle a un rôle très important à jouer, mais je tenais dans cette présentation-là à ne pas être spécifique par rapport aux Franco-Ontariens.

M. Beer: D'accord, et je pense que je comprends que c'est une thèse pour tout le système.

Deuxièmement, avez-vous l'impression qu'il y a le même besoin ou la même demande d'un tel rôle dans le système de la part des étudiants au secondaire anglophone? Est-ce qu'il y a une différence, disons culturelle, entre l'approche que vous venez de nous présenter et celle de vos homologues de langue anglaise?

M. Dumais: Sans doute. Particulièrement lorsque je parle d'atmosphère, d'activités sociales et culturelles, il est évident que c'est beaucoup plus important du côté des francophones, car à l'école, qu'on y étudie les mathématiques en anglais ou en français, ça restera les mathématiques qu'on étudie. L'idée, c'est que tous les cours – ce n'est pas juste les mathématiques mais tout le travail qui se fait auprès du jeune – ça se passe dans un endroit bien spécifique qui est l'école. Ils ne sont ni plus ni moins pris pour y aller. Ils n'ont même pas le choix: il faut aller à l'école.

Alors, il faut que ce soit intéressant, ce milieu-là. Si ça peut refléter la culture francophone en plus, on vient d'atteindre deux objectifs: on maintient une culture, on assure la relève francophone; en plus, on éduque des jeunes qui seront aptes à travailler et puis à contribuer quelque chose à la société plus tard. Effectivement, je pense que la dimension de la reconnaissance d'un engagement social et culturel, ce serait peut-être plus important pour les francophones que ce ne l'est pour les anglophones, mais ça n'exclut ni l'un ni l'autre.

M. Beer: Merci.

Mr. Mahoney: My French lessons have not yet progressed far enough to allow me to ask the question en français.

Madam Chairman: I suspect the fact that Mr. Mahoney just said to me I was doing great with my French—he went to the same school I did—is an indication that it is probably best if you ask it in English.

Mr. Mahoney: I am still going, so perhaps in the future.

I was interested in your concept of involving the students more. I wonder if you would consider taking it to the extreme—it may not be an extreme—of making the role of education part of this crowded curriculum that we have talked about and having the students actually study what it is they are doing and why they are there. They perhaps could get a better comprehension of the purpose of education; it would seem more relevant to them; it would have a bearing if they could in fact look down the road and say, "The reason I am taking this seemingly nutty subject is that it will help me do something down the road." What about the idea of actually making that part of the curriculum in either the French schools or the English schools?

Mr. Dumais: I do not know if you are a parent.

Mr. Mahoney: I sure am.

Mr. Dumais: You must know that whenever vous obligez quelqu'un à—

Mr. Mahoney: If you want to answer in French, I do not mind.

Mr. Dumais: I will try my best.

When you force somebody to do something, especially young people, you are almost sure they are going to try to do the opposite.

Mr. Mahoney: It is true.

Mr. Dumais: I am quite sure that in most cases when a student has an optional course that he chooses to take, he gets better results in that

one than in a compulsory course. That does not mean that every course should be optional. I just want to mention the fact that, indeed, if they are not involved in the process of determining objectives and that sort of thing, they walk backwards into the school or into the classroom. What you are saying is quite right. They should be involved in that process just to understand where they are going, where we want to take them.

Mr. Mahoney: Or where they are going to take us.

Mme la Présidente: Merci d'avoir participé aux discussions du Comité aujourd'hui. Thank you for coming.

M. Dumais: Je vous remercie, c'était un grand plaisir.

Madam Chairman: I believe we will recess for approximately 15 minutes. Our next presentation is by the Ontario Federation of Students, and I do not believe they have arrived as yet, so we will reconvene in 15 minutes at 3:45 p.m.

The committee recessed at 3:30 p.m.

1545

Madam Chairman: As we pursue our review of the goals and philosophy of education this afternoon, we are pleased to have before us the Ontario Federation of Students. I believe Shelley Potter and Joan MacNeil?

Ms. Potter: Yes.

Madam Chairman: Good. Please feel free to read your brief or to summarize it, if you feel it might be a little lengthy and that you do not need to go through the entire thing. Just allow some time for questions at the end because I know that many of our members have indicated they are quite anxious to find out what our students are thinking. We just had a francophone presentation from the students. We are eager to see whether you have similar viewpoints. Please, go ahead.

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF STUDENTS

Ms. Potter: Good afternoon. My name is Shelley Potter. I am chairperson of the Ontario Federation of Students. I would like to introduce Joan MacNeil. She is the researcher for the Ontario Federation of Students. We are pleased to be able to make this presentation to you today. The Ontario Federation of Students is the organization which represents post-secondary students in Ontario. We have member organizations on every university campus in the province, and at several community colleges.

Campus student organizations become members by holding democratic referenda in which

individual students vote on the question of whether to join the federation. In all, we represent about a quarter of a million students in the province. Thus, we are the second largest lobby group in the province, exceeded in size by the Ontario Federation of Labour. The purpose of our submission today is to make clear our vision of education and to discuss those elements of our current system which are of concern to us.

As the only consumer group in the entire education system, we occupy a unique position vis-à-vis such discussions. Primary school students lack the skills and maturity—perhaps the age—to organize themselves on issues which may be of concern for them, and at least in Ontario there is not yet any broadly based provincial organization which can speak for secondary school students. So we are the only group that can speak of our education system from the point of view of the consumer—the student.

Although much of our presentation today will focus on those factors at the primary and secondary level which affect access to post-secondary education, we wish to make it clear from the outset that we are concerned about the quality of the educational experience for all students at the primary and secondary level, regardless of whether they aspire to post-secondary education. We realize that not everyone wants to, or must, attend college or university. However, we believe that every student, regardless of their post-secondary plans, should acquire good writing, reading, math and science skills and sufficient understanding of the social and political processes to enable them to participate fully in our society. To that end, we believe that education must be an empowering process, one that reinforces students' sense of self-worth and develops the skills needed to learn about the world, contribute to their society and participate in changing it.

We keep close tabs on the primary and secondary school systems because we are well aware that many of the barriers to post-secondary education operate at the primary and secondary level. These barriers have to be removed, not only because they interfere with later accessibility to post-secondary education, but also because they interfere with the quality of education received by at least half of the students at the primary and secondary level.

We also believe that the nature of the changes taking place in our economy and our society compels us to re-evaluate our approach to education, not only with respect to content, but also with respect to the forums and institutional

settings in which the education takes place. We must have a different approach to education, an approach which recognizes that it is no longer feasible to expect that most people will get all the education they need in primary and secondary schools and then disappear into the workforce, never to get to a school again.

We believe that a better educated populace is desirable from a social and political standpoint, as well as an economic one. We have faith that it is also achievable. We like to be optimists in this sense. First, let us deal with the concerns we have with the elementary and secondary systems as they are currently designed. We are concerned about the quality of education being offered to younger students and about equality in terms of the benefits derived from the educational system by various groups of students within the system.

We are disturbed to find that of all the factors which affect a student's educational outcome when predicted at the grade 1 level, the most reliable predictor is the socio-economic status of the parents. We do not believe that average- and low-income students are less intelligent than high-income students, nor do we find it acceptable to blame their parents for not offering the advantages at home which give more privileged children a head start in school. Something is fundamentally wrong in any school system which produces such extremely different educational outcomes for students according to socio-economic background. The school system appears to be pitching itself not to the students from an average, let alone lower, socioeconomic background, but rather to the higher socioeconomic status students. It is the latter group's experiences, interests, values and linguistic habits which are reflected in the curriculum and textbooks used by students, and the attitudes and practices of the teachers who control the educational experience of the students.

1550

The results of this are both frightening and sad, and most readily apparent at the secondary level. After grade 8, students are streamed into one of three streams: basic, general or academic. Low-income family students are 23 times more likely than wealthier students to be placed in the basic stream and only half as likely to be placed in the academic stream. The academic stream, however, is the only stream which offers any possibility of access to the university system or, increasingly, to the college system.

The basic program has a dropout rate of 79 per cent, and the few who stay are not usually taught enough to have access to any but the poorest-

paid, most boring jobs, the kinds of jobs that most of us hope to leave behind with our adolescence. They are automatically and permanently shut out of any possibility of post-secondary education.

The record of the general stream is not much more encouraging. We understand that the original purpose of the general stream was to prepare students for entry into Ontario's community colleges of applied arts and technology, the CAATs as we call them. Yet the dropout rate from the general stream is 62 per cent and only 11 per cent go on to community college. Of that 11 per cent, only half graduate.

Statistics indicate that students are more likely to graduate from high school if they are from a high socioeconomic status family and score low on intelligence tests than if they are from a low socioeconomic status family and score high on intelligence tests. We find it rather strange that money matters more than intelligence in our current education system.

To allow so many of life's opportunities to be eliminated by the grade 8 to grade 9 transition point is unfair and unwise. Our province's 13- and 14-year-olds have a right to better than that.

We do not wish to say more at this time about the streaming question, because we will be making another presentation on streaming before this committee in September as that is, I guess, when you are going into more depth. However, we find it impossible to talk about the usual educational experience at the secondary level, because the experience is so shockingly different in content, quality and outcome, depending on the student's stream; so we thought we had to bring it up at this time just briefly.

There are also many other problems which need to be addressed—sexism and racism, especially that sexism and racism which operate by making people invisible through their absence in our readers, history textbooks and as role models in the school system, and disparities in educational opportunity for certain linguistic groups.

At the post-secondary level, although girls from middle- and upper-class backgrounds have achieved rates of participation in undergraduate post-secondary institutions equal to those of their brothers, there are still huge disparities regarding participation in the hard sciences and many professions, such as engineering. Also, far fewer women than men go on to a graduate school, and after entering grad school a higher percentage of the female students than male drop out.

We think that this lower rate of participation in sciences and graduate work by female students is

due, in part, to the socialization they receive at the primary and secondary levels. The school system should be making more efforts and must be allocated more resources by the province to actively counter the negative socialization female students are subjected to by the media and other influences.

As well, female role models are lacking in the sciences at the secondary and post-secondary levels. The government should address this both by compulsory corrective education on the contributions of women to the sciences and by directing school boards to institute affirmative action in the hiring of female science and math teachers.

Other factors which contribute to lower rates of participation by female and ethnic students include lack of awareness on the part of students, their parents and guidance counsellors of the possibility of student aid; lack of discussion of the employment possibilities opened up by post-secondary education; lack of adaptation of the student aid system to compensate for the gender gap in summer earnings; lack of child care and the inadequacy of social assistance and student aid.

Finally, among average and low socioeconomic status groups, there is a significant gap in the level of financial support parents are willing to offer their daughters compared to what they offer their sons.

This may have a very significant effect on female students' choice of program. To the extent that they and their parents perceive financial investment in post-secondary education for daughters as more extraordinary than investment for sons, female students feel they must play it safe and make sure that the financial investment is not wasted. They want to make a safe choice.

Given the lack of role models and sexual stereotyping in the media, high school girls are less likely to feel confident about their abilities in the hard sciences and math. Young women still are hesitant to go into hard sciences and certain male-dominated social sciences, such as economics, at the post-secondary level for fear of not making good on their parents' possible financial investment.

Clearly, there is much work to be done, many changes to be made in the curriculum and textbooks used in our system and in the attitudes of teachers and parents. Attitudes to education can be changed relatively quickly. In one generation we have moved from grade 8 or 9 graduation being the expected endpoint for the

majority to an expectation of graduation from high school and, for many students, more education beyond high school.

Another significant factor in the quality and outcome of the students' educational experience is the involvement and encouragement of parents. Schools should be allocated more resources and personnel to do active outreach to parents. Very little is currently done to involve parents in their children's education. The occasional form letter goes home in a child's lunch box inviting the parents to an annual parent-teacher event. However, that is just not enough communication, especially given that 24 per cent of Ontario's adult population is functionally illiterate and many parents are literate only in a language other than English.

All too often choices are made which seriously limit the educational and work options of students, without adequate consultation with the students or the parents. This is particularly prevalent among average and low socioeconomic students, immigrant children, children of colour and disabled children. For example, a recent study in the Toronto Board of Education found that 50 per cent of the black students intended to go to university, yet 34.6 per cent were in special education classes. Presumably their parents were quite shocked when, in the course of the study, they found that in fact post-secondary education of any type was no longer open to their children, certainly not immediately after they had graduated.

We suspect that the same may be true of other choices that students make in the course of their education; for example, the choice of many students to take fewer maths or to drop them entirely. The same is true of chemistry and physics and those sorts of courses. Not all teachers and schools have the same results with minority children, children from average and low socioeconomic families and female students. Some teachers and some schools are very successful in making sure everybody gets a fair shake.

More effort and, of course, as we always say, more money must be allocated to educating teachers on how to work with students from a broad range of backgrounds and their parents, and providing teachers with the resources to do so. Resources must also be provided directly to parents' groups, to assist them in organizing themselves and becoming more informed about the educational issues which affect their children.

Regarding francophone education, there has been a modest improvement in francophones' access to secondary education in their own language in recent years. However, until at least one unilingual French-language university and several community colleges are set up with a full range of programs, francophones will not have true equality of educational opportunity. Bilingual institutions are simply not enough, because they still result in a narrow range of programs and course choices for francophones, as well as a milieu in which the dominant language is and always will be English.

The government has often proposed post-secondary education in Quebec as an alternative to unilingual institutions here. As a general strategy it is just plain unacceptable and silly, because it leads to a constant drain of the best-educated francophones out of Ontario and into Quebec, since Franco-Ontarians who study in Quebec often decide to settle down there. This in turn leads to a lack of Franco-Ontarian role models in the Ontario educational system, especially in the sciences and the professions, which reinforces lower educational aspirations among francophones. As well, it reinforces the perception among francophones that to become well educated leads to separation from family and community.

Also, we believe that the government should make a massive effort to eradicate illiteracy. As previously mentioned, fully 24 per cent of Ontario's adult population—that is, 1.6 million people—is functionally illiterate. This means one in four cannot read well enough to fill in a job application form, to understand a prescription or a warning sign on a container or understand a letter from their child's school. How can they possibly get involved in their child's education if they simply cannot even read the parent-teacher invitations?

Every year illiteracy costs Ontario businesses alone an estimated \$1.6 billion in lost productivity, extra supervision, industrial accidents and other consequences. This does not include the costs to the government in the form of increased health costs, Workers' Compensation Board claims, welfare payments and lost tax revenue. The social costs, in terms of the frustration, embarrassment and discrimination faced by illiterate people and their children, are enormous.

As it is, only about 2.5 per cent of illiterate people in Ontario are being reached by any literacy program. We are distressed that the government is not more concerned about the

impact of illiteracy on the quality of life, health and safety of these people, and we are amazed that the loss of productivity in the economy due to illiteracy is not of greater concern to the government.

The children of illiterate parents are at a severe disadvantage in the school system. The government should allocate more funding to literacy training based in schools for parents of students. This year the provincial government is allocating only \$40 million for literacy training, the same as it spent last year and the year before. That works out to about \$25 per person to reach and alphabetize the 1.6 million illiterate people in Ontario.

1600

We think it is time the government took the bull of illiteracy by the horns and wrestled it to the ground. The government must stop seeing expenditures on education and literacy training as drains on the Treasury and instead recognize them for what they are; namely, solid investments in the future of our society and its economy. High-quality, accessible education costs, but ignorance is much more expensive in the long run.

The budget for literacy training should be at least tripled, and perhaps even that would still not meet the need.

As well, the government's funding should give higher priority to helping school boards and post-secondary institutions make our buildings and our programs truly accessible to people with disabilities. We abhor the mentality which considers that merely a ramp outside a school building or segregated classes for disabled students constitute an adequate response to the challenge of educating disabled people, and we are concerned that too many disabled primary

and secondary students are being discouraged from aspiring to post-secondary education by teachers and guidance counsellors.

In addition, the government must redesign our education system to make it academically possible and financially feasible for people to re-enter the education system periodically after graduating from high school. There should be opportunities for lifelong learning, both in educational institutions and in other settings. We imagine that some of this education can take place in the workplace; however, we do not want workplace education to be oriented primarily to addressing the wishes and needs identified by employers, but rather to be controlled by and oriented to the benefit of the adults being educated.

The government must also accept that the nature of economic changes taking place will compel us to have a much higher proportion of our populace educated at the post-secondary level than we did 20 years ago. Indeed, it may be that having a post-secondary diploma or degree will have to become the norm rather than the exception, as it still is. This development is not a regrettable but rather a healthy development. However, it will, of course, require significantly different priorities on the part of the Treasurer.

One problem which has wracked the post-secondary system since the 1970s is the inadequacy of provincial funding. The allocations each year have failed to keep up with inflation and enrolment increases, leading to a decline in the quality of post-secondary education in Ontario. In constant dollar terms, provincial funding for a post-secondary student to the institutions has declined by about 17 per cent over the last 10 years.

utility of studying hard and may not put the same kind of effort that students put into their studies when there is more hope of getting into the college or university of their choice.

The impact of this lack of accessibility falls most heavily upon those who have less-than-ideal living situations for obtaining very high marks: students from average- and low-income backgrounds; students whose parents speak English as a second language; disabled students; and students who cannot afford to move away from home to the few universities which are still accepting students with average marks.

In order to begin to address the real funding needs of the universities and colleges, enhance accessibility to post-secondary education and deal with the impact of pay equity legislation, we are recommending a 25 per cent increase in operating grants.

Finally, it is absolutely essential to recognize that education does not occur in a social vacuum. We cannot overemphasize the impact of non-educational factors on the educational experiences and outcomes of students in Ontario. There are a variety of wrap-around services needed to make education and literacy programs more accessible and to enhance their impact.

One in five Ontario children live below the poverty line and many more are just slightly above it. It is estimated that nearly half of Ontario's children may be going to school inadequately nourished. The education system sees itself as feeding minds; however, its efforts would probably be more successful if those minds were not attached to hungry bodies living in crowded apartments.

School breakfast and lunch programs are an efficient, effective way of improving the health and educational potential of school-age children and should be expanded.

Decent, affordable housing is absolutely essential if a person is to be able to concentrate her or his efforts on learning and on helping their children learn. Both the government and our federation have hoped for many years that the private sector would build affordable housing. It is now abundantly evident that the building of high-profit luxury condos is of more importance to private developers. Since housing is such a basic need, the government must stop waiting for miracles and instead itself begin to significantly expand the supply of affordable housing, including student housing.

Expansion of quality, universally accessible child care facilities is a major priority for the federation, because they are essential to ensure

that female students can enter, continue and succeed in their studies, as well as participate in the workforce after graduation. Currently a number of municipalities categorically refuse to consider married female students or female graduate students for day care subsidies, regardless of family income.

Moreover, good-quality child care is an important tool in equalizing and improving the cultural capital children from various backgrounds bring with them when they enter the school system.

Income-maintenance programs and the Ontario student assistance program must be reformed to recognize real living costs, so that education is accessible to all, not only to the well-to-do and those without family responsibilities. The federal government should accept literacy training as legitimate for the purposes of receiving unemployment insurance. The province itself must invest in programs which remove the financial pressures which cause so many high school and post-secondary students to leave early, programs which do not burden students with debt.

In summary, we want an education system which provides everyone, regardless of socio-economic background, nationality, language, race, gender or physical abilities, with the following: good reading, writing, science and math skills; a comprehension of the economic, social and political processes sufficient to enable them to analyse their society and make informed choices, both personal and as members of a community; strong confidence in their right to belong and participate, and in their ability to do so; respect for human rights, and an abhorrence of barriers which prevent other members of our society from functioning as equals; and options and opportunities for lifelong learning, be it in the post-secondary institutions of our province or in other yet-to-be-established educational milieux.

We thank you for this opportunity today. We know we are asking for everything. We feel it is necessary, however. If you have any questions, we would be more than happy to try to answer them.

Madam Chairman: You are certainly to be commended for such a comprehensive and well-thought-out presentation today. You have given us a plethora of information to start with. Mr. Adams has a number of questions.

Mr. Adams: Would you mind if I asked you about your own backgrounds? Are you students now, or were you students? If so, were you in university or college?

Ms. Potter: I just finished my masters degree at Wilfrid Laurier and I did an undergraduate at Acadia in Nova Scotia.

Ms. MacNeil: I did an undergraduate degree at Concordia. I also have a child in the school system.

Mr. Adams: Were either of you in science?

Ms. Potter: At Acadia, psychology was considered a science, so I guess I was. However, at Laurier it was the arts.

Ms. MacNeil: I was in arts for my undergraduate degree. I went back a second time to try to do sciences and I found it very difficult because I did not have the background from high school.

Mr. Adams: It is rather personal and hypothetical, but under other circumstances at secondary school can you imagine yourselves, for example, going into psych in a heavily scientific way or going into science, or do you think even if you had been exposed to it you still would have chosen the disciplines you did?

Ms. Potter: I made a conscious decision to drop physics and chemistry in grade 10 because I simply hated them. Maybe I was not willing to do the work. I found that every day we would go into these classes and be grilled for 10 minutes, just open questions from the teacher, so I dropped it knowing full well that I would never be a medical doctor then. It caused quite an uproar in my family. However, maybe if classes had been structured differently, I would have stayed with those.

Ms. MacNeil: I was interested in going into medicine and I had the marks to do that, to go into pre-med, but my guidance counsellor told me that women doctors had a high rate of divorce and that unless I was willing to have an unhappy personal life, I should not go into pre-medicine.

Ms. Potter: Now she is with the Ontario Federation of Students and she has an unhappy personal life.

Ms. MacNeil: No, I have no personal life.

1610

Mr. Adams: I do not want to generalize; and I do appreciate that, it is very interesting. As I understand it, part of the problem with both men and women in science is that even when they finish in science and do well in high school, they switch in first and second year at university—you must have had friends and colleagues who did that—into arts or they go from hard sciences to social sciences.

Ms. MacNeil: This is just a guess; I have a feeling that maybe we are not as strong in our

primary and secondary skills in the sciences and maths as we are in some of the arts and humanities. As a federation, we want to have a balance of both. We are not interested in preparing people simply for high technology. My impression is that in some other countries the math skills of students relative to their reading skills are a bit higher than they are here for the grade level.

Ms. Potter: It is not a good choice to make for funding reasons. The social sciences are simply not as well funded as the hard sciences. If one is looking for money and for support through school, one should really stick with the hard sciences.

Mr. Adams: With quite low grades, you can go into graduate school in the hard sciences and get very good scholarships. It is interesting. If they finished high school, their math and science skills in general are high but they are still not going into science. I just mention that to you. I think there are problems all the way through the system which are biasing all sorts of people—I do agree—particularly women, away from the sciences. It is something we should address.

I actually want to talk to you more about the colleges; but first of all, in your brief it says you are the only group representing students. The previous group we had was an Ontario-wide francophone secondary school students' association and it was representing that particular group, and you mention that you keep tabs on the secondary system. I wonder how you do that. This group was here representing secondary students. I wonder how you delve into the secondary system as it is at present.

Ms. Potter: We watch them like hawks. We consult with other people: educators, researchers at various institutions; we obtain research documents that are put out by other institutions and federations that look at secondary and primary education. Also, we have a constant influx into the federation of people who have just come out of the system. Every year we get hundreds of students active in student federations who can tell us what is going on at the primary and secondary level.

Mr. Adams: You tend to get the ones who have survived, do you not?

Ms. Potter: Definitely.

Mr. Adams: You do not have secondary students on your committees or on your executive?

Ms. Potter: No.

Mr. Adams: I think you know there is a very large review of the colleges going on at present. They are 20-odd years old now and they are being looked at to see if, in fact, they have achieved the things they set out to do and so on. I think you know that one of the things about them is that they have grown up in a very independent fashion so that each college is remarkably different. That is because, for example, they have responded to local needs and things like that.

One of the things that concerns me that was mentioned this morning is the links between the high schools and the colleges and between the colleges and the universities. To give you an example, I have read there are more students going from university to college in this province than the other way around. That is quite unusual. I am not arguing that college should simply be a stepping stone to university, but that really is quite unusual and something that I am sure was not expected 20 years ago. Similarly, a point I made this morning, in this province you cannot get a high school diploma in college. Has your association looked at links between schools and colleges and colleges and universities?

Ms. Potter: The only thing we are looking at is the transferability of credits and whether college credits can be accepted at universities. We have not really looked at the migration from universities to colleges.

Mr. Adams: What about the transfer of credits from university to college?

Ms. MacNeil: The colleges, it seems, are a little more willing to accept credits from the universities. The reverse is totally untrue. The universities of Ontario are extremely rigid about accepting college credits. For example, a person with a two-year diploma from an Ontario community college can go straight into third-year university in a science program in Alberta or the United States, whereas here they have to start over. They will be lucky if they get some first-year credits. That is a major problem for a lot of college students who, after they find that they really enjoy the subject, would like to move up and do a degree. They cannot do so without starting all over again, if they stay in Ontario.

Mr. Adams: Can I just have one more? My colleague this morning did take a certain amount of time.

Madam Chairman: Yes. I would just like to remind members that we have approximately 15 minutes left. We have Mr. Johnston, Mr. Jackson and Mr. Reycraft.

Mr. Adams: I have two more things, but I will follow through with one. It is interesting. I have discovered scores of examples where you can in fact transfer credits from particular colleges and particular programs in them to university. I can give you one example where, after a three-year program in a college with certain marks, you can complete a degree in a year. The thing that surprises me is that it is not general and no one knows that. Your guidance teacher, for example, would not have known that beforehand. Have you found that?

Ms. Potter: That there is simply no standardization?

Mr. Adams: You can, in fact, transfer a credit; it is simply not general.

Ms. Potter: Which does not help students.

Mr. Adams: Not at all.

Ms. Potter: To know that maybe there is one course that you can transfer just simply does not help you. Students have to know beforehand what they are entering into.

Mr. Adams: That is right.

Ms. MacNeil: And there is no appeal process. In fact, that is something we would like to see, that there be a body to which you can appeal if the university says no. We know students, for example, who have applied for advanced standing at a university on the basis of credits from somewhere else.

Ms. Potter: Even university to university.

Ms. MacNeil: You get "yes" at some universities; "no" at some universities. Some universities will give you a credit for a year and a half; some will not give you any. It is totally arbitrary, and there is no one you can appeal to for a change in that decision.

Mr. Adams: I will leave my question on student housing.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. If there is sufficient time at the end, we will certainly allow you another question.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I have just a couple of things. I appreciate the brief, by the way. I thought it brought in a number of major factors which not all groups have been raising with us in terms of emphasis. I liked many of the things in it. There are a few questions that are begged by it, and one of them that strikes me that we have not really dealt with a great deal now, when we have talked about the goals of education and the underlying philosophy of education, is that there was a presumption at one time that grade 8 was a sufficient level to attain to be able to survive in

society. In fact, part of the argument around the whole of Bill 30, the extension of Catholic funding, came down to different people's notions of whether grade 8 was in fact what that full commitment was now or was the basic education really much more like grade 12.

Although you have one sentence that alludes to possibly post-secondary education being the norm in the future, I wonder if the federation has given any thought, any research or anything like that to consideration of just what are the basic levels of education that we should be expecting people to attain to be able to survive at the end of this century and going into the next.

Ms. Potter: As we say in our brief, we do not want to assume or say that everybody needs to have post-secondary education, but it strikes me that a BA or a BSc is the equivalent of what grade 12 was years ago. It is necessary. You can just look at job application forms. Whereas a couple of years ago it would stop at high school they have extended, just for typical jobs in department stores, which says to me that people who have a lot of education are applying for those jobs so the forms have been expanded somewhat in the area of education.

Ms. MacNeil: We certainly want to do more research on it, but the economy is changing in such a way that you need to have very good reading and writing skills and analytical and math skills, minimally, to have flexibility in terms of what kinds of jobs you can seek, what kinds of things you can do within certain work situations.

1620

Looking at Ontario within an international perspective, I think the crunch for us as a province is going to be do we have as well-educated and flexible a populace, in terms of skills, as the countries we are competing with? If we do not, then we are going to have to compete with them by lowering wages. That will lower the standard of living, and I do not think Canadians want that. I think the key to improving our economy and improving the quality of life for people in the province is to up the educational level of the populace so that we have a lot of people in the province who are capable of being very productive and adapting very quickly in different work situations.

The day when you graduated from school, worked in one place for two or three years and then moved immediately into the job you were going to stay in for the next 50 years is gone. Now people have to be able to move back and forth in different work situations and change. I do

not know if that addresses what you were getting at.

In terms of the vision, I guess also we do not see education as just something that you do to people to make them acceptable to employers. We want education to be something that people get so that they can participate in their society, so that they can change their society, so that they know what choices they are making. We do not see education as job training essentially; we see it in a broader sense.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That is interesting, because you started out by mostly talking about how the capacity to perform in the economy was essentially the benchmark you are using.

Ms. Potter: We feel if we do not make the economic argument somebody will ask us a question anyway, so we might as well get it out of the way.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: One thing you do not raise when you deal with this—and it is another question begged by the things you are saying—is there is very little in your paper about pedagogy, appropriate pedagogy at the turn of the century in terms of the way information is disseminated. We have still a very hierarchical approach.

Ms. MacNeil: I think we will get a bit more into that when we come back again in September on the streaming issue. We think a lot of the questions of pedagogy will be dealt with in that because there is formal streaming and informal streaming. I think we will deal with that; but yes, there is still a very hierarchical situation in the learning place, that is true.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I have two other short things. One is the whole question of illiteracy and where literacy programs should be placed and sponsored. This government, following from what the Conservatives have done before it, has moved from having illiteracy—first, it was dealt with under the Ministry of Education, which is where one might expect it to be dealt with, then it was moved to the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture by the preceding government and now it has been moved to the Ministry of Skills Development.

Although you dealt a bit with the problems of illiteracy, I am wondering if you maybe have some commentary about the notions of either remedial assistance around illiteracy or helping new immigrants become literate, etc., whichever it may be, given that 70 per cent of people who participate in literacy programs are Canadian-born and-educated. You did not make any real comments about how all that is being dealt with,

because much of that is now being seen to be totally outside of what we now call the education system.

Ms. Potter: Literacy programs are a part of education. It should be back in colleges, universities, workplaces, wherever people are, wherever they can go to, I guess, develop the skills they need; but I do not see it as a Skills Development thing at all, I do not see how it fits in that ministry. Literacy should be in every ministry, wherever we have people working, wherever people can learn: in the workplace, in colleges and universities, everywhere.

Ms. MacNeil: I think there is a need for a broad range of delivery systems for literacy training. One of the ones that has not been developed enough is literacy services in the schools for parents of children. That is one way to reach a large number of people, and it is a way that also would have some impact on the quality of education of the children by helping their parents become literate.

I think the other thing is that, bearing in mind the underfunding of the post-secondary system, we are reluctant to add another function to it; but on the other hand, we know that not all adults who are illiterate have children and not all of them who are would feel comfortable going to a school where there are children. Many of them would feel embarrassed or humiliated by that. In that sense, perhaps what we need to do is look at opening the colleges and universities to adults for literacy training.

That said, I would say that is with the proviso that it be properly funded, because certainly the system is in enough crisis as it is. I think the college and university administrators would go crazy if they were asked to offer another program with no more funding than they are receiving now.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Johnston, in view of the fact that we do have several more speakers—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I was just going to tell you that.

Madam Chairman: You did say two more questions, so I was somewhat apprehensive.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I was just going to tell you that my other questions, although they fall in line with what Mr. Adams was raising, things around the connections of the universities and the various levels of education, as something we really do have to talk a bit more about in terms of the philosophy of education at some other time, because I know other members will have questions.

Madam Chairman: Thank you so much, Mr. Johnston.

Mr. Adams: Could I waive my supplementary?

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Adams. I love the three-party co-operation we are having this afternoon.

Mr. Mahoney: You can take me off the list too. My question was asked.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Mahoney.

Mr. Jackson, I assume that you are not going to be waiving your question and would like to go forward.

Mr. Jackson: Yes, and I would like also to observe that most groups get 45 minutes. This group has been allotted only a half an hour, which is unfortunate.

Madam Chairman: You will note that at 4:15 when the time was technically over, I did extend it for 15 minutes for that very reason. I think, inadvertently, just through a typographical error, they were given 15 minutes less time. I think that has been corrected.

Mr. Jackson: OK, great.

Let me commend you for the the breadth of your report. Am I to interpret that your lead concerns, socioeconomic outcomes and the problems, as well as literacy, are considered your major concerns about the elementary and secondary school system?

Ms. Potter: With respect to people getting into the post-secondary education system, we see those two things that you mentioned as the barriers to people getting into post-secondary institutions.

Mr. Jackson: In the initial part of your presentation, you indicated you were speaking for students. At least I got the impression you were, in a way, speaking for secondary school students because you had recently experienced that and been in transition into the post-secondary level. Did I get the wrong impression?

Ms. Potter: We have not done a lot of research into that. We have done studies. We have gone to the secondary school system and asked students what they think about going to university or college and how do they think they will fund it and do they perceive debt load as a huge barrier to their entrance, but it was a very small study. We have to do more research before we can speak for all. These are just some things that we have been seeing.

Mr. Jackson: Have you examined the Radwanski report?

Ms. Potter: Yes.

Mr. Jackson: I am uneasy, and I guess the reason I am uneasy is that of all the presentations, yours is the closest to the Radwanski report in terms of its emphasis on outcomes, as reinforced by your statement in support of, I guess, the principle that is applied to the Premier's Council report, that in order to be competitive we must be skills-oriented as well and that we have to be focused on outcomes. Am I interpreting too much into that? That is what I am hearing.

Ms. Potter: We talk about education as being an empowering process and having people have the skills to participate fully in our society and not just to equip them in certain skills. We certainly do not see education that way at all, not at all like the Premier's Council would see it.

1630

Ms. MacNeil: Very differently. To clarify: Our concern about outcome is outcome as it relates to the person's socioeconomic background, that there is an inequality of outcome there; that if you are from a well-to-do family you are getting more out of the school system than you get out of it if you are not. That is our concern in terms of outcome.

Mr. Jackson: I know you are not trying to oversimplify how complex that matter is.

Ms. MacNeil: Yes, it is complex.

Mr. Jackson: Clearly, part of the failing of that is in terms of promoting students who are inappropriately promoted, the inappropriate promotion of students who have not achieved certain levels. In that regard, Radwanski makes a very strong argument in his documentation that students should not be promoted until such time as they attain certain levels. I guess I am getting a very strong sense of that am I not; or what am I missing?

Ms. Potter: We would be encouraging the secondary and primary systems to respond better to those students who perhaps cannot learn now in the present system, to encourage teachers to just be more accommodating to those students who, for whatever reason, because they just have not had a good meal that morning, cannot seem to concentrate; or to students whose parents' language is other than English. We would recommend the school system get properly funded so that they can answer to these needs, not really talking about cutoffs. I mean if the student cannot make this then you simply hold them back, that kind of thing. We would rather put the

emphasis on having the system meet the needs of those students.

Mr. Jackson: We had the deans of the teachers' colleges here today. I referred to applications for teachers' college as being similar to a crap shoot or a lottery game. It is terrible. Do you and your association have any objection to us moving as we have moved for applications to medical school? Do you have any feelings about a similar movement to putting less emphasis on grade attainment and more emphasis on suitability in the teaching profession? From a student perspective, I would be most anxious to hear the reaction to that. First of all, is my question clear?

Ms. Potter: Yes. I think we would far rather move to that.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Reycraft.

Mr. Reycraft: I do not really have a question, Madam Chairman. I do not think I indicated I wished to ask one. Thank you very much for the opportunity, though.

Madam Chairman: He has been making strange signs to me. I guess it was not to ask a question. I am sure it was about some other weighty matter.

I would like to thank you very much for coming before us today. I think the members would certainly agree that if you two are an example of the product coming out of our universities, we are being well served by our education system.

Mr. Jackson: Madam Chairman, be careful. They both received education outside of this province at some point in their lives.

Madam Chairman: All right. It is good to know that our Canadian educational system is thriving. Thank you very much for coming.

We will now go on to the Ecumenical Study Commission on Public Education. Thank you. Once you are seated, perhaps you would like to introduce yourself for the purposes of electronic Hansard. We see you have quite an extensive presentation and we hope you will allow time for questions at the end. Thank you. Proceed whenever you are ready.

ECUMENICAL STUDY COMMISSION ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

Dr. Girhiny: My name is John Girhiny. I am the executive director with the Ecumenical Study Commission and it will be my purpose to try to set the scene of our representation to this committee today. It comes in four parts. Part I is now under way, which is the introduction of the members present and some brief introductory

remarks. The second part of our presentation consists of reference material, eight packages of which have been lodged with the clerk for the caucuses and so on. I will come back with reference to that.

The third part of our representation is in the form of a brief, copies of which are before the members of this committee.

Finally and most important, the fourth part of our representation is the opportunity to respond to questions. We had anticipated taking roughly 20 minutes of your time while you listened to our formal presentation and in the rest of the time we could respond to questions of hopeful interest in this area.

The member immediately to my left is Don Santor, who currently holds the position of chair for the Ecumenical Study Commission. To the far left is Doug Palmer, who is the past chairman of the Ecumenical Study Commission and long-time chairman. The fourth member in the dark suit is Rev. Chris Page, who comes to us from Australia, so I will be careful about any comments made about our Ontario educational system after the last trap you fell into. He has been with us for three years, is a graduate of McMaster and is presently undergoing work at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, so I think we can assume a little credit for his educational upbringing as well.

With the package of reference material I referred to, we have provided eight copies, which I understand is appropriate for caucus, library, Hansard, research and so on. If anyone is so interested and finds himself with so much free time this summer that he would like to wade through this extensive material, he can see me and I will be only too happy to provide him with his own personal copy. That gives you some idea of the documents we presented and the work we have been doing over the years. It is not something that developed over the past year or two. There are two journals representing two of the conferences that we have held here in Ontario.

We are going to make our formal brief, so that you do not get bored listening to one voice, in two parts. I will be taking the first part and Mr. Santor will be taking the second part of the brief.

We are not asking for the sun, the moon or the stars; we are asking for only two things, and this is one time when we hope we will get 110 per cent of what we ask for as opposed to asking for more and getting less.

We are suggesting to the select committee on education that it should propose, as one of the

goals of education in Ontario, helping each student to develop an understanding of and a respect for the religious traditions that are part of contemporary society; and, second, it should urge the Ministry of Education to proceed expeditiously with the actions necessary to implement in the public schools of Ontario a multifaith religious education program at both elementary and secondary levels.

For those who may not know, the Ecumenical Study Commission on Public Education is a unique body whose membership consists of representatives appointed by the Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and United churches. Its funding comes from its membership.

We are not a newcomer to discussions about educational philosophy and goals. Since our inception in 1969, the commission has made submissions to successive ministers of education and to special agencies such as the La Pierre commission and the secondary education review project. Our latest submission was in 1984 to the then Minister of Education, and we are still awaiting a response to the brief that was presented on this topic.

The commission has hosted a number of conferences on religious education and has published a number of pamphlets and booklets on specific religious education topics.

It was with some surprise, then, that we learned we had not been included among the large number of organizations invited to assist the select committee in its consideration of educational philosophy and goals. We are strongly of the opinion that such an organization as ours, with a specifically religious point of view relative to the question of education goals, should be heard by this select committee.

At the time of the writing of this brief, we were not aware whether such an appearance would be possible. It was our hope—and is now a realized hope—that an appearance would be possible since we are most anxious to have the opportunity to respond to questions that the committee members may have. We feel strongly that a written brief in the absence of such an opportunity can present our viewpoint in only a very limited way.

I would like to deviate from the written brief at this point to express our sincere appreciation and thanks to the powers that be. I was warned not to be sexist in my religious references today, but I think it is very appropriate to use the term “whoever she may be” in this case, because I can only think of female individuals who would be listening to our appeal, whether it was yourself,

your assistant, Lynn Mellor, your secretary or whoever was instrumental in getting us this very-prized slot. We are most appreciative of the opportunity.

1640

Madam Chairman: We will take credit for it.

Dr. Girhiny: We do take some comfort from the fact that Dr. Richard Allen, MPP, in his speech to the Legislative Assembly on the occasion of his moving resolution 27 on May 19 of this year, took note of the fact that the Ecumenical Study Commission on Public Education has been proposing a renewal of religious education in our public schools for almost two decades. The commission commends Dr. Allen for his action in moving resolution 27 and other members of the Legislative Assembly representing all three political parties who spoke in support of the resolution.

It is not our place to suggest to the select committee how it will deal with resolution 27, which we do understand has been referred to this committee to be handled as it deems appropriate. We would note, however, that the subject matter of the resolution is certainly germane to the mandate that the committee has established for itself during this round of deliberations.

The Ecumenical Study Commission believes that one goal of education in Ontario should be helping each student to develop an understanding of and a respect for religious traditions that are part of contemporary society. A number of comments may be in order relative to this proposed education goal. It is closely related to some of the goals of education set out by the Ministry of Education on pages 3 and 4 of OSIS, the Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions document, and most particularly to those numbered 9, 10, 12 and 13. For those who do not remember the numbers, there is an appendix at the back that you can quickly flip through.

Some would argue that the goals as presently stated are sufficiently broad to subsume the proposed goal. In the opinion of the commission, the present goals are not sufficiently explicit in this regard to give assurance that curriculum developed under them will achieve the desired purpose. I think, also, that experience indicates that we are not being too presumptive in making that conclusion.

The commission envisaged the proposed goal being achieved through a multifaith, religious education program, by which we mean teaching about the history and practice of the major living religions and not instruction in a particular faith

position. A multifaith approach represents as authentic the faith positions of many religious communities and is sensitive to the needs and aspirations of a multicultural society.

It is recognized that such a program could succeed only if the same kinds of infrastructure are put in place for religious education as exists for other parts in the school curriculum, for instance, appropriate regulatory provisions, curriculum development, professional preservice and in-service training and certification. This would involve substantial effort by the Ministry of Education, by local boards of education and by faculties of education.

As a note to that point, it might be interesting to note that the representation on the Ecumenical Study Commission over the years has changed from more clerics to more educators. You have before you three people who have had extensive experience in our Ontario educational system at the elementary, secondary and tertiary levels, either by individual or by combination. That is a very cognizant move by our bodies. This is a more appropriate mix to try to meet the need that currently exists.

I would like to then turn over to Mr. Santor, our chairman.

Mr. Santor: On page 6, you can see the rationale, and I would like to draw these salient features to your attention. The Ecumenical Study Commission on Public Education believes that religious education should be an integral part of the curriculum because education in religion is an historical and legal right which, according to the Education Act, shall be allowed to the parents of Ontario and, in spite of the profound changes in Ontario's society since the Second World War, the government still has a responsibility to support and maintain a viable program.

Religion is one of the great unbroken threads of human experience that traces its roots to the dawn of history. Students, if they are to understand what it means to be fully human, must have an opportunity to know what it means to be a religious person. Religion is the key way to systematically understand the purpose and meaning of life. Representative insights should be considered from the perspective of world religions.

A moral values program, which the ministry has been working on for a number of years and has endorsed, while important to the growth of the child, can and must be compatible with religious education, but cannot be a substitute for it.

Students should have the opportunity to appreciate the role religion has played in the historical evolution of their community—that is the local community—of the broader community of Ontario, and indeed of Canada; one might also add, of the international community as well.

A knowledge of religion is essential for understanding our culture, as expressed through its art, architecture, music, literature, philosophy, and indeed, education. It is virtually impossible to understand major world events without a knowledge of the religions that are active on the world stage.

Religion, along with the sciences and the humanities, is one of the three primary approaches for understanding the nature of reality. To deprive students of the opportunity of studying religion would leave them with a truncated education.

A knowledge of religion is foundational to appreciating the multicultural and multifaitth composition of our society. It is essential for promoting the current vision of tolerance and understanding in public and private life in Ontario.

Events in Ontario and other jurisdictions suggest that there has developed within contemporary society an attitude that would welcome a renewal of religious education in the public schools. A number of Ontario boards of education are taking the initiative to develop multifaitth religious education programs to meet their obligations under regulation 262 and to respond to the wishes of their local communities. A press clipping describing the efforts of one such board, the Frontenac County Board of Education, is attached as appendix 2.

The Ontario Public School Trustees' Association, in its recent policy statement, expressed regret at the lack of leadership of the Ministry of Education with respect to religious education and recommended a religious education program in the public schools based on a multifaitth and multicultural approach.

According to the research report entitled *The Policy and Practice of Religious Education in Publicly Funded Elementary and Secondary Schools in Canada and Elsewhere*, published by the Ministry of Education in 1986, there is some movement in the direction of multifaitth religious education in Canadian provinces.

While the outline given is somewhat sketchy, there appears to be significant multifaitth material in programs in Newfoundland in the integrated system involving the Anglican Church, United Church and Salvation Army groups at both

elementary and secondary levels; in the Protestant system in Quebec at both elementary and secondary levels; in Alberta, the secondary only; and of course, with the world religions course offered in the senior division in Ontario. In Nova Scotia, a 1974 royal commission recommended formal programs in comparative religion, but the research report does not record whether such have been implemented.

The same research report notes that the United States Supreme Court decision that declared confessional religious education unconstitutional recommended that nonconfessional religious education be given. In this connection, it is interesting to note that at a recent conference in Washington, 14 organizations representing public educators and a broad range of religious groups were able to agree that "study about religion in public schools, when done properly, is both constitutionally permissible and educationally sound." A copy of a press clipping containing a report on this is attached as appendix 3.

In England, a number of local education authorities have agreed to syllabi with strong multifaitth components. A number of other countries have also initiated multifaitth programs. These include Scotland, Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Singapore, and this list is by no means complete. In fact, in 1985, the Netherlands passed legislation making multifaitth religious education compulsory for all its various school systems. The Report of the Commission on Private Schools in Ontario—as you know, Bernard Shapiro was the commissioner—contains three recommendations relating to religious education in the public schools. At both elementary and secondary levels, a nonconfessional program with a comparative perspective is recommended.

The Ecumenical Study Commission on Public Education agrees wholeheartedly with Dr. Shapiro's opening statement, in which he expresses the belief "that the provision of religious education in our schools has the potential to provide a basis not only for the understanding of one of the most significant aspects of human experience, but also for the development of tolerance and understanding among members of Ontario's multicultural society."

1650

A copy of the religious education section of the report is attached as an appendix.

The ecumenical study commission does not speak for Christian denominations not represented in its membership, nor for non-Christian

groups. However, commission officials have met on occasion with representatives of various other religious groups, which include Buddhists, Muslims and Sikhs—this list is also not complete, just to make the point. As a result of those meetings, we have confidence that those groups would welcome the introduction of a multifaith religious education program into our public schools.

At present, we have scheduled a meeting with the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward). Various representatives of other faiths have requested to be present at this meeting to lend their support.

We believe that the inclusion of religious education in the curriculum of our public schools is and must be justified primarily on the basis of the contribution it can make to the full development of the student. We would note, however, that a case for its inclusion also can be made on historical and legal grounds.

Subsection 50(1) of the Education Act, which gives a pupil the right to receive religious instruction, has a history going back to the period preceding Confederation. From a study of the education debates of that period, it is clear that religious education was an important part of the instructional program in the public schools. It is not unreasonable to claim that when the constitutional guarantee respecting separate schools was agreed to, it was in the context of an assumption that religious education would continue to be an integral part of the public school program. The assumption is given further credence when it is considered that the provision that now appears as subsection 50(1) of the act has remained essentially unchanged from its enactment in 1850 to the present.

Given this background and the acknowledged fact that the present regulations related to religious education are unworkable, the commission believes that the government has an obligation to create a new program that is appropriate to the changed realities of contemporary society, and at the same time true to the legislative commitment contained in subsection 50(1).

Dr. Girhiny: Mr. Vice-Chairman and members of the committee, you will notice that we did pay attention when you tried to sneak and change the chairman around on us.

The Vice-Chairman: Very observant of you.

Dr. Girhiny: We note from the statement issued by the select committee on education dated May 3, 1988, that the committee's review of education philosophy is to examine fundamen-

tal goals as they relate to the equal life chances and full development of each student.

We believe that one of the questions the committee should address is whether education can be said to fulfil the ideal of encouraging the full development of each student if it does nothing to develop an awareness of things spiritual. The Ecumenical Study Commission on Public Education believes that the full development of each student can occur only when all of the dimensions of human experience, including the religious, are included in the curriculum.

We urge the select committee to include, among the other important goals of education which it will address, that of helping each student to develop an understanding of and a respect for the religious traditions that are part of contemporary society. We also request that the committee prompt the Ministry of Education to act as expeditiously as possible to introduce a multi-faith religious education program in both the elementary and secondary levels of the public school systems.

I think we have kept to the time allotment we had designed for ourselves and we certainly hope there will be many questions that we will attempt to field from the committee members. Thank you for the opportunity.

The Vice-Chairman: Thank you. I hope the members of the committee are as disciplined with their questions as you were with your presentation. Both Mr. Adams and Mr. Johnston have indicated they wish to ask questions.

Mr. Adams: Gentlemen, thank you very much. I do not like to begin like this, but I would like to play the devil's advocate. Is that appropriate with a group like this?

Dr. Girhiny: With a spiritual group? It sounds perfect.

Mr. Adams: As you present this, we follow the logic in this very clear brief and the conviction with which you presented it. It is such an obvious case, by the way, it is sort of obvious that religion clearly is a part of our society, that it is very important and we should all know about it. That is why I said the devil's advocate, because I think you have argued it before. You realize that the reason it is not in the curriculum now, I think, is not because it is not clear or logical. It is because of the concerns, particularly of people who consider themselves to be religious. I think there is a large segment of people very interested in religion because they are religious, who think there is no such thing as religious education which is, as you say,

nonconfessional. Can you argue the other side of that for us?

Mr. Santor: Sure.

Dr. Girhiny: If you had a few weeks.

Mr. Adams: I understand.

Mr. Santor: I would appreciate the opportunity to argue it. I would add that tomorrow morning at the faculty of education at the University of Western Ontario, I will be dealing with this topic in a four-hour seminar with my students.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: We will send a representative.

Mr. Santor: I invite you all to come.

I would answer that question first based upon my experience and address it experientially. I have taught religious education in the public schools of Ontario in a nonconfessional manner for a seven-year period. During that seven-year period, we received no complaints from the community regarding bias, instruction, etc. So I think we can say that experientially.

Then we would have to probe further and say, "Why success?" Success because there was a lot of time spent in preparing and in addressing methodologies, in approaching this thing through the appropriate methodological approaches. This is critical.

In the past, religious education has been done without undergraduate qualifications for teachers, without teacher training, without the necessary preparation. As a result, it has perhaps left the impression from time to time that it can only be confessional. If, however, we take the approach that there is a body of knowledge we can work with, that there is a unique methodology to approach it with, then we can deal with the questions and not, quite frankly, run into any difficulties whatsoever.

The critical factor is education, teacher training. This has not been the case in Ontario's history and is still not the case. There is no course for certification at the faculty of education level at the present time.

Dr. Girhiny: To play a double devil's advocate, my wife has also had experience similar to Mr. Santor's in elementary schools in Ontario, long before it became in vogue; and that is all she will permit me to say because anything beyond that will identify her age.

Second, I have also done it myself from the multifactor approach. What you are contending is a position which says it has not worked in the past, so we ought not to do it. We have a lot of evidence—I think you were alluding to it with the student group before us—that mathematics,

which is one of my strong areas and one where I have done a lot of leadership training for teachers and so on—I was involved with the Ontario Mathematics Commission—has also been recognized as being done very poorly. I have yet to find anyone suggest that mathematics should be deleted from the curriculum of Ontario.

Mr. Beer: A lot of students may.

Dr. Girhiny: Students, yes; but not anyone who makes decisions. Students have certainly opted out of it, as they have with physics and a number of other difficult subjects, but we do not suggest that it is not important to them, that because we do a poor job of it or because we cannot motivate them or because we disinterest them or turn them off, therefore we should take it out of the curriculum, which is really what has happened with religious education.

We have had people who have taken a more zealous approach than maybe is appropriate, a more specific, a more confessional, a less interesting approach, whatever is the particular rationale or reason for the dissatisfaction. The approach has been, "Well, let's take it out because it infringes upon human rights."

What we are professing is that everyone has a religion, which includes an atheist as being a religious person, and so is an agnostic, and if you take all of those people and put them together then everyone has one. Therefore, there should be no bias and no prejudice.

Mr. Adams: If you have something that is a bit less than four hours which argues that case that you could let the committee have, I think the committee would be very interested in it.

Mr. Santor: There is another critical component to the answer to your question and it occurs on page 5 of the brief, paragraph 2, in which we endeavour to spell out in a very brief manner the difference between religious instruction and religious education.

It has been our experience in dealing with religious communities across the province, as well as with teachers' federations, trustees' organizations and parental groups, that once this understanding has been made clear—"Oh, that is what you mean by religious education"—that it is not religious instruction, then we seem to have laid to rest the concerns about confessional instruction. Those concerns are laid to rest when we can approach this topic through the appropriate methodologies. Of course, to illustrate this very briefly is very difficult, but none the less, I do think you are raising the critical question in terms of the ultimate answer.

1700

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I wish Richard Allen were here today to be able to address this, because he comes at it from a slightly different approach than I do, if you read my speech in Hansard, as someone who considers himself blithely irreligious at this stage. Having been very religious and then having become quite anti-religious, I am now mellowing; it is one of the few areas I am mellowing in.

I supported his resolution, but with some major qualifications on it which I do not think you share. I want to check that out, if I might. I make a very important distinction between the instruction and education sides of things, as you do, but I also want to make the distinction between observance, celebration and confessionality versus the whole notion of education.

I look at your position on opening exercises, frankly, as somebody who does not share the religious beliefs that seem to be enunciated here. I have a little difficulty with the notion that you want to limit yourselves only to education if, as part of the opening ceremonies, you still want the Lord's Prayer and that kind of observance for those of us who do not share the particular desire to hear that over a broadcasting system in the school.

I would like to understand where this ends. If it can be kept clear that this is part of a whole anti-racist, holistic approach towards your kid's education, to understand belief structures and nonbelief decisions that are made, then I am fine on it. If this is an opening towards greater observance, according to the Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation study, there is already a fair amount of observance of this particular Protestant bias, in my view. If this is a move, on the other end, to opening up creationism, which we are already seeing a fair amount of pressure about in terms of the teaching of the sciences, then I have huge problems with it.

I have read the rationale in this paper, of course, for what this is about, but I have a little difficulty with my compartmentalization of what you really want to do here when I see your position on the opening exercises.

Mr. Santor: There is a wide range of responses to your questions. I think that Dr. Girhiny can—

Dr. Girhiny: You did not identify whether you are playing devil's advocate or not, and I suspect you might be.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: No, just advocating for myself, actually.

Dr. Girhiny: Why I suggest that is—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: He can look after himself.

Dr. Girhiny: On pages 5 and 6 of the document that you flashed before us, we clearly indicate "The Lord's Prayer or other suitable prayer." That is number one. Number four says that "The Lord's Prayer be somewhat regularly used in order to familiarize the students with this religious symbol." The way I heard you representing it, it sort of sounded like we were demanding the Lord's Prayer form a part of it, and this was unacceptable to yourself.

The other point that ought to be made is that this document is four years old. This document precedes this one by considerable—there is no date yet; I checked for that before I got myself into trouble on that one.

Those are some of the specifics of it. I would not argue against your concerns. I think they are very real. I think they will be very real in any environment that comes forward. All I can suggest to you is if you want to find comfort from experience, Great Britain has it in place, the Netherlands has it in place and Singapore is presently putting it in place. As a member of ICET, which is the International Council on Education for Teaching, I have had the opportunity to meet with the key people in all these areas from different countries. I have been assured by them of all the problems they have run into and all the successes they have reached, and they are cognizant in each case of those particular problems.

Maybe Mr. Santor would like to continue with the philosophy part of it.

Mr. Santor: I think it is important to note that some members on this commission did participate many years ago in the Toronto Board of Education's attempt to broaden the base of opening exercises. Obviously, it represents some endorsement of a broader approach.

I think that I would like to pick up on the point of creationism. I think this is a prevalent idea which must undergo the normal dialectical analysis, and indeed it is at the heart of education and at the heart of schooling that we should probe for truth and so on. The dialectical process is instrumental in education and indeed is foundational to religious education as it is being promoted across the western world.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am not sure I would necessarily accept the second, but I do accept the first.

Mr. Santor: I, for one, speaking for myself personally, certainly do not carry a brief for creationism, I want to assure you.

Dr. Girhiny: I should at least respond that I did read Hansard and I did read your part of the response and the reply to dialogue. It has not been brought before the commission as yet. I am not sure they are interested in reading all of that Hansard, but I have. I found no difficulty with the objections you raised. I think they are very valid concerns and I think those are the concerns that anyone who enters into this field ought to have very foremost in his mind.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: One final thing, if I might—sorry.

Mr. Palmer: I would just like to make two comments here, since I was chairman when the opening exercise was passed. I think it is probably the best philosophical statement we have in this whole area on religious education. It can be argued and debated, but I think philosophically it is probably the best piece of work we did. It took us about two years to do; it was the early 1980s before we finished it, so it is probably about seven or eight years old now.

The other point I want to make is that I was very pleased that Richard Allen got support from the New Democratic Party on his motion. There was real delight on my part that there are members within the NDP who are in support of his work. He has worked very well with us over the last three years, and we have appreciated dialoguing with him on this.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The dynamic there is very much one of a tension between civil libertarians and others who are looking for a more holistic approach to education.

I know I should not take more time on this, but I would just ask you one question. A lot of our discussion, and it will probably end up in our debate as we try to write something of this, is centred upon the goals for education that are already listed by the Ministry of Education, which have a notion of tolerance put forward around these kinds of views but do not mention anything as specific as religious education being part of what is anticipated within the system, at least that is not the way I would interpret it.

Dr. Girhiny: I think you are going to run into trouble with the ministry person present if you try to get away with that.

Religious education is in part referred to in the section of the regulations that deal with religious education instruction, opening exercises. Our concern is that the—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am talking specifically about this document, The Goals of Education, which we will be dealing with. The only mention

of religion in it is number 13, "Develop values related to personal, ethical or religious beliefs and to the common welfare of society." You could also add 10, "Esteem for other customs and cultures."

What I am saying is that if we, as a committee, start to look at the underlying goals which are elaborated by the ministry—forget about what the act itself says specifically at this point—your concerns are not addressed in this specifically. I guess I am asking whether the vague allusions you could take from 10 or 13 here are sufficient in terms of what you would like to see in a statement of goals or whether, as you seem to be alluding to in your document, you want stronger specific language than that.

Dr. Girhiny: I think a 14th one would be most appropriate.

Mr. Santor: I think it is appropriate to note that this statement of goals was written up many, many years ago and at the time this document was being thrashed out the view was that there is little or no difference between a religious education and religious instruction. Folk simply did not think in terms of two alternative approaches and, as a result, normally when people thought of religious studies, they thought of instruction only. That meant confessional teaching and, therefore, the folk who thrashed out this document could find no room for it, nor justification.

Having been privy to some discussions many years ago, I can say confidently that was the kind of concern that was raised. Therefore, rather than put it in and create many problems, it was simply left out. I think, in the intervening years, it has been clear that there has been a philosophical base, a rationale and a methodology that has been approached and developed which will deal with the concerns that were talked about in the late 1970s and early 1980s. It is a good point, though.

1710

Mr. Palmer: Mr. Johnston, I would like to go back to a little bit of history of the Ecumenical Study Commission. We saw this dilemma in religious education in the early 1970s and it took us five or six years to sort out our approach on this and to come to a conclusion that the multifaith approach was the only way that we, as religious denominations, could promote some kind of program within the school system in Ontario. So I think, since 1977 or 1978, we have been fine-tuning our approach to this and our understanding of it.

We feel that the materials you have from our commission are all out of date now, because

there are concepts that have changed. We appreciate what the Ministry of Education did on the goals of education in the early 1980s. But if they wrote them today, I think they would be much more aware of the religious element in their goals of education.

Madam Chairman: We have less than 10 minutes left and we have Mr. Beer, Mr. Mahoney and Mr. McClelland on the list, so I will ask you to try to make the questions very short.

Mr. Beer: I have two questions. While I am substituting today on this committee, I support the view that religious education should be carried out in the schools. That is also in part based on the experience of dealing with it as a teacher at the secondary level. Indeed, there are programs which are, as you set out, religious education programs and not religious instruction programs.

One very fundamental observation in all this, one of the reasons I think we need to do it, is that if you were to pick out certain topics or areas where you can bring a class to life—and I am speaking here of the secondary schools, because that is my experience—religious issues is one of the areas where you have a tremendous interest among young people who really do want to know more. Many of them may have very little knowledge either of their parents' religion or what might have been their grandparents' religion, and a keen interest in other religions.

I can recall in a particular school where, for the first time, a substantial group of Muslim students came. Several of the students in the senior grades talked about their religion and a discussion that was supposed to go on for half an hour went on for some two and a half hours because of the interest, not on the part of the teachers but because of the students. So I think we have moved beyond the problem between that which is instruction and that which is education. I think that is important and I just wanted to state it.

In relation to Dr. Shapiro's recommendations, are you suggesting that would be a good place to start in terms of the government dealing with this issue, using those recommendations to devise or develop a program?

Mr. Santor: Whether or not it is a good place to start would require further scrutiny. I think certainly his recommendations should be part of a mix that one might consider when dealing with this problem. It is not a case of saying "I am not sure" or "I don't know." Certainly, they must be considered. Whether one starts there remains a moot point.

Perhaps a place to start would be to look at fundamental philosophical questions which revolve around this. We are talking about education in a broader context. Obviously, we are narrowing it down to what we are talking about here, and that is schooling and the educational function of the school. I realize the sign on the wall outside says "Education." I presume we are talking about schooling, but there has to be a connection between the two. Some of Dr. Shapiro's recommendations do not include the broader philosophical context, and maybe that would be a thing that should be looked at when you consider this.

Members of the Ministry of Education have from time to time participated in seminars that the Ecumenical Study Commission has sponsored, and we always focus on fundamental philosophical and theological questions. Dr. John Hull, who is one of the Brits who is most well informed on this topic, keeps on reminding us that that is the foundational place. Maybe that is where we should begin. But Dr. Shapiro's stuff is important. Make it part of the mix, most certainly.

Dr. Girhiny: Maybe a glib answer to your question would be to say any start would be welcome. As I say, our representation or our brief to the minister is four years old. We have taken this back to our bodies who have said they find this intolerable and they themselves, all the bishops and leaders of the representative churches, have requested strongly a meeting, which is now scheduled for September, to try to impress upon the current ministry that we would like to see a beginning made post-haste.

Our wording to the select committee has been very gentle. What we would really like to say is, get it done for us yesterday, please, but we chose to be realistic about our presentation to you and realize that you have a time line to prepare your report, which will probably take you into the end of this year or the beginning of next year. Hopefully, by that time your recommendation will be already in place, but probably not; therefore, we decided to play it safe, rather than be sorry.

Mr. Mahoney: This is Queen's Park. You do not really expect this to be done yesterday.

Dr. Girhiny: I worked at Queen's Park and they did expect it to be done yesterday.

Madam Chairman: That did not mean that it got done yesterday.

Mr. Mahoney: No, that is right.

Dr. Girhiny: Well, sometimes.

Mr. Mahoney: On the issue, the historical significance of religion is, I think, an obvious fact. There are probably some parts of all our respective religions that we would rather not have repeated historically, some of the skeletons in the closets of all our faiths, but I think it is important that they be taught to people.

I have always felt that before you can really understand where you are going in life, you have to understand where you have been, what your background is, what your roots are and your family's roots. I can certainly accept the concept, and even, in studying modern-day history, studying what motivates men like the Ayatollah and others. That should be part of our educational process. Certainly there is some religious background involved in that particular conflict. So I can accept it very clearly from a historical point of view.

My concern, however, is around the points that have been discussed. Just to give you a bit of my background, I was educated in the Catholic system in the 1950s in the elementary school, in the Catholic system in the secondary school in the 1960s. Particularly coming out of elementary school, I came away with the impression that the Proddies were the bad guys and we were the good guys. I really felt that was, at that time, a message that was being frankly taught in some of the schools.

Obviously, it is a message that we would not want to have taught in any way to our children today. However, I think that was a very real message that many young people were coming away with, particularly in the 1950s. It started to break more in the 1960s and, hopefully, it is also a part of our history that perhaps should be taught as well, that that situation occurred.

In teaching a multifaith program based on historical realities, based on historical facts, how do you eliminate the bias from that particular course, to call it that? I assume you are talking about a compulsory system here, that this multifaith program would be compulsory in the public school. I assume that is what you are saying. How do you find that special person who can teach it without giving a bias that would be seen as instructional in some way towards the students?

1720

Dr. Girhiny: First of all, I think you hit upon the answer to what you were describing has happened to you historically. It is unfortunate the powers that be would not have found that acceptable, but individuals did something that

was not in keeping with the Christian or Catholic philosophy that existed even in that day and age. You did not have to be Jesuit or Holy Cross to have a more progressive education than you seem to have received. It is rather unfortunate and regrettable, but you seem to have survived in spite of it all, which is maybe—

Mr. Mahoney: With some scars, I might add.

Dr. Girhiny: Second, finding the appropriate teacher is always the very difficult object. Again, you hit a very key point. We have mentioned it in the brief and Don Santor has referred to it again at least two or three times today in response to questions.

It is more particularly difficult to address that question if you are going to look at an integrated approach, which Mr. Beer was suggesting earlier, as being part of what we are talking about here in changing of history and curriculum. I do not think you can take a walk into any elementary school in Ontario or any secondary school in which current events is not part of the elementary or secondary program. You cannot open a newspaper without finding an issue which has some religious connotation and bias or influence on what is happening.

Knowing and learning from history is an appropriate thing for people to learn at an appropriate stage in life. If you are obviously trying to develop faith at home, a school ought not to contradict that by saying, "Oh, but we were really bastards a long, long time ago," and excusing that because that child is not ready to accept that. For instance, you can take your Ayatollah example and say, "He is not the only church leader who has made a mistake in history. Let's take a look at a few of the others."

Mr. Mahoney: Sure.

Dr. Girhiny: Finding the appropriate teacher is very difficult. That is one of the reasons why we emphasized, I hope, in our short brief the key points to develop that infrastructure, which is talking about teacher training to foster the appropriate climate, to take the in-service work that is necessary to provide them with the academic background ahead of time, to do some of the evaluations, both psychological and methodological—pedagogical—that are necessary. We are not suggesting this is going to be easy. We are just saying it is going to get done one way or another. How many more fiascos do we put up with? How many deserts do we walk through in education before we realize that we have to do it, so let's wade in and do it. Learn from the other countries that are doing it reasonably well and improve on it.

Mr. Mahoney: I guess having said that, you would, by implication, admit that there is a danger of the bias coming through in certain areas and it is something we would have to monitor.

Dr. Girhiny: There is a bias in any subject that you teach in the curriculum.

Mr. Mahoney: Let me just ask one final question. A number of the groups that have appeared before us this week, I think, have suggested there needs to be substantially more involvement in the home in educating our young people, involvement of the parents in the home life and educating even the parents to educate the children. There was also at least one group where the discussion centred on the church being more involved. If you do add another item such as this to the already crowded curriculum that we are talking about all this week and will be for some time, are you downplaying the role of the home and the church by again teaching it in the schools?

Dr. Girhiny: I guess before Don answers you very well, knowing Don on this subject, let me just address it. You keep talking about adding in. That may leave a wrong idea that we are taking 101 subjects and making them 102. What we are suggesting is that it is part of all education and that you need to address that.

If you go back to that period of time, you may be able to remember dimly a book called *To You the Torch*, which was written by Frank Clute when I was in school. It was a hot bestseller just off the press. I have now dated myself. He happened to be coming from the same area in which I was going to school, so we got to meet the author, which for a little youngster was a big deal. That was a course in civic citizenship, a stand-alone subject with its own slot and period of time in the week and its own little textbook. That was the only time we talked about citizenship and civics. You did not worry about whether the youngster was stealing behind your back and use that as an opportunity for teaching civics or anything of that nature. It was a self-contained little unit.

What we are hoping to move to eventually, because it is a step-by-step procedure, is a recognition that it is an integral part of the entire curriculum and, therefore, although it needs a curriculum guideline like any other subject, it permeates as part of it and is not an add-on and therefore more of a struggle.

I will let Don go for the philosophy.

Mr. Mahoney: Just before you answer, would it not really, in practice, simply become part of the history course?

Dr. Girhiny: If it does, then obviously we are not being heard. Certainly, as an educator, I would be most loath to find that as the way to put this into the curriculum. History is certainly a way, but it is not the best way.

Mr. Mahoney: Yet you want to teach the students about the historical significance and the history of religion, as opposed to instruction.

Dr. Girhiny: We are talking about the basic tenets and an understanding and an acceptance of religious belief. The first introduction may very well be in an art class. It may very well be an exposure walking around the neighbourhood and seeing what religious buildings are there. What are the differences? Can we go in and take a look at them? It may be an extremely rudimentary and very rough approach to it. When you talk about parents—and I do not want to get into that, because I am sure Don wants to address it—to try to educate the parents is something we cannot do right now. Hopefully, what we are doing is educating the parents of the next generation, and I am sure you are aware that is a difficult problem.

Mr. Santor: The questions you raise are foundational. I think it is important to turn back the clock only about six, eight, 10 years or so. In 1980 I was employed by the Ministry of Education to work on a foundational document in the area of moral values education. The fundamental and underlying principle for that document is simply this: We share the same child, the home, the religious communities and the communities beyond that, as well as the school. It seems, therefore, that we should co-operate and get together and find out what in the world is going on.

While the school is not to do the same thing as the home or the religious community, which involves itself in instructing the child in the faith, the school's role here is to go beyond that and make sure that folks recognize that we do live in a multicultural, multireligious society. Indeed, the Ontario government has committed itself to the multicultural philosophy.

Those who have experienced the development of religious education in other jurisdictions have said on occasion that perhaps the very soul of the culture that we are looking at is the religious orientation. How can we understand this multicultural society we live in unless we start to feel, to understand the multitude of orientations around us, the religious and the nonreligious, which give people a handle on purpose and meaning in life?

One of the incredible experiences that I use right now in order to respond to you is having spent a full year in a secondary school in Ontario only two years ago. One of the abiding questions that kept on coming up from people, regardless of religion, ethnic origin and socioeconomics, was, "Why has this happened, why are we here, and what is the purpose of all this thing?"

It seems to me that there is a foundational need for people to understand what in the world we are doing here, why we are here. While these answers cannot be definitive in any way, shape or form, at least we owe it to our kids to say to them, "Look, these questions are as old as history, as old as humanity." We owe it to them to address them from a pluralistic perspective and understanding.

We have found within this context that the actual tolerance for people in a classroom really goes up. I say that as a result of having worked in classrooms for seven years. However, I do share your concern about bias, absolutely. As John has mentioned, however, the fears over bias have not led us to stop teaching history, literature, health education or science education. Indeed, there is room for bias there. In fact, I would submit that there is room for bias in every single subject in the curriculum. Even the epistemology, which we support through our curriculum, is a bias. Therefore, your concern is, how do we overcome it? I would say we can go one, two, three, four.

First, we have to make sure the people who teach religion have knowledge, not just in their own religion but beyond that.

Second, we have to absolutely insist that if they are going to teach this, they must be trained in it. We do not let people teach other subjects without training. Why should we do it in religion?

Third, there has to be material, but we cannot get the widespread development of these materials until the publishers can look back and say: "The ministry is saying this is important. Let us dedicate ourselves to it." Then the publishers will move in with materials. Then we also have to make sure the approaches are appropriate, not instructional-confessional but inquiry oriented; to find out about.

I think the key part of the question you raise is: What is the perspective? To use a Buberian term, are we going to brace that religion with an I-it dimension or an I-thou dimension?

I would submit the latter is the way to go. In other words, get inside the religion and let the religion speak for itself. It is not me describing it from the outside, but it is to go inside that religion and let that religion speak. What has it got to say? If what it has to say is meaningless, believe me, the students will be the first to know. If it has something to say that is foundational, then the students will also recognize this. But this means, of course, the development of material is one of the critical components.

I do share your concern about bias, and this is one of the significant points that led us many, many years ago to say the route is not through confessional instruction, it is through education.

Much more can be said, but I think even in this area, as in moral values education and the religious education, it is not to downplay the home, to pre-empt the home, but to simply say, "Look, we're in concert." After all, I think the entire educational process, from kindergarten to Ontario academic course, whenever that happens, is an activity of being in concert with the home and with the home communities and wherever those kids come to us from. These are the kids that we serve, and this must be the orientation we approach when we are dealing with them.

Mr. Mahoney: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much for coming today, gentlemen, and providing us with some very stimulating thoughts. We certainly will be considering your proposals in our deliberations. We cannot promise you that anything will happen yesterday, but we certainly—

Interjection: How about tomorrow?

Madam Chairman: It might even have to wait until Monday.

Mr. Santor: Madam Chair, it would be most appropriate for us to say thank you for your time and that of your colleagues, and it would be appropriate for us to close by saying we will continue to pray.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much. This completes today's session of the select committee on education. We will adjourn until Monday, July 25, at 10 o'clock. Thank you.

The committee adjourned at 5:32 p.m.

CONTENTS

Thursday, July 21, 1988

Philosophy and Goals of Education	E-223
La philosophie et les objets de l'éducation	E-223
Ontario Association of Deans of Education	E-223
Ontario Federation of Labour	E-225
Metro Action Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children	E-235
Afternoon sitting	E-253
Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario	E-253
Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens	E-253
Association française des conseils scolaires de l'Ontario	E-253
Fédération des élèves du secondaire franco-ontarien	E-261
Ontario Federation of Students	E-267
Ecumenical Study Commission on Public Education	E-277
Adjournment	E-288

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Chairman: Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)**Vice-Chairman:** Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)

Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)

Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)

Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)

Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)

Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)

Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)

O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)

Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)

Substitutions:

Adams, Peter (Peterborough L) for Mr. Keyes

Beer, Charles (York North L) for Mrs. O'Neill

McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L) for Mr. Miclash

Clerk: Mellor, Lynn**Staff:**

Porter, Ann, Research Officer, Legislative Research Service

Witnesses/Témoins:**From the Ontario Association of Deans of Education:**

Effrat, Dr. Andrew, Chair, Dean, Faculty of Education, York University

Smith, Laverne, Associate Dean, Faculty of Education, York University

From the Ontario Federation of Labour:

Turk, James L., Director of Education

From the Metro Action Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children:

Stewart, Catherine C., Education Consultant

De l'Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario:

Soucie, Rolande, présidente

De l'Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens:

Sincennes, Yves, premier vice-président

De l'Association française des conseils scolaires de l'Ontario:

Gratton, Ginette, directrice générale

De la Fédération des élèves du secondaire franco-ontarien:

Dumais, Guy-marc, secrétaire général

From the Ontario Federation of Students:

Potter, Shelley, Chairperson

MacNeil, Joan, Researcher

From the Ecumenical Study Commission on Public Education:

Girhiny, Dr. John, Executive Director

Santor, Don, Chairman

Palmer, Doug, Past Chairman





No. E-8

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Select Committee on Education

Philosophy and Goals of Education

First Session, 34th Parliament

Monday, July 25, 1988

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

CONTENTS

Contents of the proceedings reported in this issue of Hansard appears at the back, together with a list of the members of the committee and other members and witnesses taking part.

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues can be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at (416) 965-2159.

Hansard subscription price is \$16.00 per session, from: Sessional Subscription Service, Information Services Branch, Ministry of Government Services, 5th Floor, 880 Bay Street, Toronto, M7A 1N8. Phone (416) 965-2238.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Monday, July 25, 1988

The committee met at 10 a.m. in room 151.

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS OF EDUCATION (continued)

Madam Chairman: Welcome to this session of the select committee on education, as we look at the philosophy and goals of education in Ontario. We are pleased to welcome today the Down Syndrome Association of Metropolitan Toronto, the Down Syndrome Association of York Region and the Integration Action Group. Welcome to our committee. If you would like to identify yourselves for the purposes of electronic Hansard, then you can start your presentation. We would hope that in the 45 minutes we have allotted, you will leave sufficient time at the end for questions, because I know the members are quite interested. Commence whenever you are ready.

DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION OF YORK REGION INTEGRATION ACTION GROUP

Mrs. Langdon: Thank you. My name is Lynda Langdon and I would like to say good morning to everybody. We are here today because we need your help. All of us are parents of children who have special needs. The current term in the education system is that they are called "exceptional children." All of us have experienced lack of equal educational opportunity for children in the system or, in Fran's case, stand to experience it at some point in time. We desperately need changes to the Education Act and the regulations to make integration available to our children and we need you, the law-makers, to help make that happen.

The motto of the Integration Action Group is *discant cum ceteris*. What that means very simply is let them learn with the others, and that is all we want. Today we will tell you why that should happen and how it can happen with your support. We are going to tell you very briefly some personal stories so that you will know a little bit about each of us. First, we have Marilyn Dolmage, who is a director from the Integration Action Group.

Mrs. Dolmage: I am personally challenged by my son Matthew, who is 14, and I believe that all of you are challenged by Matthew and other children like him too. I hope you would see more than Matthew's disabilities, because I think he has a unique contribution to make. Unfortunately, Matthew and my whole family have suffered greatly because of Ontario's present Education Act. We disagreed with the Muskoka Board of Education where Matthew was isolated from his brother and sister, from his friends and from his neighbourhood and sent to another town to attend school. He was denied an appropriate education and he was given no opportunity to associate with nondisabled children.

The resulting Bill 82 appeal process that we undertook was an incredible waste of time, energy, money, resources and talents. Matthew lost two years of his education and we were forced to leave our home. By moving to the neighbouring school board in Simcoe county, we have been able to create better opportunities.

I am here today because I feel that students like Matthew, my children, your children, our families and our communities should really no longer experience this kind of discrimination.

Mrs. Langdon: Next is Stan Woronko, who is the past president of the Integration Action Group.

Dr. Woronko: I have a daughter, Katherine, who just turned 17. Just over three years ago, she was in a so-called class for retrainable retarded in the York Region Board of Education. We tried very hard as parents to get her out of there because she was not learning anything, she was exhibiting behaviour problems and she had no friends. Life was miserable for us and for her. Then we fought through the appeal process that exists for identification placement review committees and we got nowhere because the school board was fully complying with the Education Act and had the power to decide whether a student is segregated.

We then saw an opportunity. We redirected our taxes to the separate school board in York region and then Katherine, at the age of 14, was enrolled in a regular high school. Within two months, she was registered in regular classes with typical peers. She does not speak, she does not read and she does not write, but they

developed programs for her which enabled her to learn alongside her peers.

1010

Today it is a big success story because she has been there for three years, she has a lot of friends and she is enthusiastic about school. The life of our family has changed. There is something very wrong in the education system when something that one school board says is impossible and inappropriate turns out to be a big success story in another school board. It is time to have the Education Act changed so that school boards no longer have the power to arbitrarily segregate students with disabilities. It is time for all children to have the same opportunities that my daughter now enjoys.

Mrs. Langdon: In my situation, I have a five-year-old daughter, and towards the end of May, the public school board offered me three options for her. She is about to start kindergarten. One option was to be bused out of the neighbourhood. The other option was to go to a nice little segregated class with eight kids, where she could sit for four years. There happened to be, I think, eight boys ranging in age from seven to ten in that class, and I have a very little five-year-old girl. The other option was to go to the local kindergarten but with no support for Stacia and no support for the teacher. That is what in our terminology we have referred to as dumping. That is not integration; that is dumping. That is not fair to anybody.

However, I was lucky. A number of years ago, my parents decided to baptize me as a Catholic. I was able to do the same thing for my daughter. She is now being welcomed into a marvellous school. She is being welcomed with support, open arms, encouragement and marvellous teachers. It is as if the public school system treated her like a label and the separate school system is treating her like a marvellous little girl. I feel very fortunate because I had that option. The point to be made here is that most people do not have that option. Most people cannot send their children to an alternative school board. They have one choice and that is it. Even though my daughter is being taken care of, I am even angrier now, because that is not fair.

This is Fran Jaffer, who is with the Integration Action Group and the Down Syndrome Association of Metropolitan Toronto.

Mrs. Marinec-Jaffer: Good morning. I have two sons. My older son's name is Aschif. He is 18 months old and he has special needs. Ever since he was born, I have been advocating his rights. Since he was one year old, he has gone

swimming with everybody else. He goes to integrated nursery school, and for the future, segregation is something that is not even the remotest possibility for me. If that is all that is offered, I will have to find some other sort of solution because I want him to grow up and go to school and be alongside his brother. That is the only solution for me. I feel it is his right.

Mrs. Langdon: This is Louise Bailey, who is the president of the Down Syndrome Association of Metropolitan Toronto.

Mrs. Bailey: I have two children, a nine-year-old son and a beautiful seven-year-old daughter eating chips back there, who has special needs, especially for chips. Andrea has never been in any kind of segregated setting. That means she never went to any special preschools or any kind of program in which she was separated from typical kids. She never has felt herself to be anything other than a typical kid.

When the time came for me to look at kindergarten and grade 1, watching people who had gone before me, I became terrified because I knew that where I live in North York, being under the auspices of the public school board, I had no options at all for integrated education. So what I did two years ago was to set up my own private, integrated school at great personal cost to me. I have to fund-raise and get a budget of \$25,000 every year. I am not a rich person. We are a typical family with typical resources. But there is no way that our daughter is going to be damaged by the segregated school system and come out at the other end as a person with very few opportunities, being isolated and feeling herself apart from the rest of the world.

May I continue on? You will see behind you several little children here, some of whom have labels and some of whom do not. You will see a couple of parents and a grandmother. All of them are here because they are interested in what is going to happen to people with labels. Everybody here wants all of us to be members of the same community, to go to school together, learn together, play together, grow up together and work together.

Parents of children with Down syndrome want the option of integrated education for their children. This means we want them to walk with their brothers and sisters and friends to their neighbourhood school as a matter of right, attend regular classes with their age-appropriate peers and have individualized programming geared to their strengths and needs delivered to them in their regular class.

The mainstream is where we want our children to lead their lives. Our kids are beggars at a banquet. When they are locked out of integrated education with their typical peers, they embark upon a course of life which runs parallel to the lives of ordinary people but does not intersect with them.

The education system is the main processor through which all children must pass. It needs to look at its foundation to see what it is teaching Ontario students about the concept of community and its responsibility to bring us together on the basis of our common humanity.

It must teach us to respect human diversity and give us the open attitude and opportunity to learn from it. Equal membership in the community leads to equal opportunity in adult life. Forced segregation of persons with specific labels such as "educable mentally retarded," "trainable mentally retarded" and "multiply handicapped" teaches division and separateness. Integration teaches that all of us are members of one and the same community.

The concept of readiness for the community which is often sold to parents implies that there are qualifications for the role of human being. People do not qualify for the community; they belong by right. Integration is not a matter of ability, as many in the educational system seem to believe. It is a matter of choosing to support and transmit respect for human values rather than survival-of-the-fittest values. It is most assuredly a matter of human rights, entitlement to equal benefit of education and entitlement to equality of opportunity.

The philosophical principles of the Ministry of Education in Ontario in the Special Education Information Handbook, which I show you here, refer generally and specifically to:

"All pupils should have the right of educational opportunity and a curriculum of a high quality appropriate to their needs, abilities and interests."

"Both the program and environment of the school should reflect respect for the worth of the individual and respect for the differences among individuals and groups."

The doctrine of separate as inherently unequal has long been established. Forced segregation of children with labels promotes the concept of two communities: one normal, one abnormal; one well, one sick; one valued, one devalued. No amount of money or focus on "special" can disguise to all children, typical or otherwise, the reality that some belong and some do not. This streaming continues on through adult life,

leading persons with special needs to lives of chronic isolation, poverty and unemployment.

Keeping in mind the ministry's reference to needs and abilities, parents across the province have been battling in identification and placement review committees to have the curriculum of children with special needs based on a strengths and needs assessment. However, children continue to be tested, labelled and slotted in the traditional manner. There exists no specific forum within which a parent may challenge the appropriateness or efficacy of his child's program, though he may challenge, mostly in vain, his child's label or placement.

The goals of education in this handbook state the specifics of the ministry's philosophy. None of these goals is anything that any of us could disagree with. However, we do not believe that these goals are achievable for children with special needs in a system of forced segregation, nor do they reflect a philosophy of community or belonging. In fact, the reality of the manner in which education is delivered in this province mitigates against it. Let us look at some of these goals in detail.

"The Ministry of Education strives...for equal opportunity for all." It "has the overall purpose of helping individual learners to achieve their individual potential in physical, intellectual, emotional, social, cultural and moral development."

Forced segregation and equal opportunity are mutually exclusive.

If the Ministry of Education truly believes that the accurate indicators of the achievement potential of persons with Down syndrome are social isolation, maimed self-images, chronic poverty and unemployment, then it is doing its job very well.

The rate of unemployment among persons labelled mentally retarded ranges from 80 per cent to 90 per cent. People First, a national self-advocacy organization of persons so labelled, estimates that out of 650 Ontario members, eight to ten have real jobs in the competitive marketplace. They state that this is not the result of lack of motivation or lack of ability but is a direct outgrowth of forced segregation and its devastating consequences in adult life. Workshops are attended, despite their terrible working conditions, because they are the only available option to overwhelming social isolation.

Goal 6: "Develop a feeling of self-worth." Persons learning in circumstances of forced segregation do not develop feelings of self-worth, despite the best efforts of their families.

Regulated contact with typical students at lunch, music, gym or art classes only serves to reinforce the feeling of differentness and isolation. They do not make the student with special needs ready for the community, nor do they fool the typical students into thinking they are one of the crowd.

1020

Forced segregation is a process of searching out, isolating, labelling and slotting. Mental health professionals from a variety of disciplines all can testify to the centrality of individual self-worth in determining school and work performance and social, sexual and family role behaviour. Do we really think different mental health rules apply to people who require extra supports?

Goal 8: "Acquire skills that contribute to self-reliance in solving practical problems in everyday life."

Our kids are not allowed to participate in that everyday life. Segregation is not real life. It is a fantasy land of many caretakers, permission for dependency, age-inappropriate learning activities, tolerance of age-inappropriate behaviours, all based on the assumption of inability to function independently as adults. Our kids are being well prepared to be the clients of social workers.

Goal 10: "Develop esteem for the customs, cultures and beliefs of a wide variety of societal groups."

Forced segregation does not teach typical kids—most of your kids—to value or respect their peers with special needs. It encourages typical students in their attitudes of derision, pity and low expectations. These attitudes continue through the life cycle, as typical people avoid, deride or pity people with special needs. Through misguided paternalism they create special places for them, such as segregated classes, segregated schools, group homes, workshops and institutions, and therefore, as potential employers or fellow employees lock them out of the competitive marketplace.

Typical students are denied the enrichment of learning and playing with their friends who may need extra help, but who are also capable of helping, learning and having fun. Those boards which integrate consistently testify to the benefits of integration to their typical students. Everyone profits from learning and working in an atmosphere where all people are truly valued for their contributions.

Goal 11: "Acquire skills and attitudes that will lead to satisfaction and productivity in the world of work."

Persons with special needs are locked out of competitive employment. Forced segregation, and all it implies about goals, expectations and curriculum, is the beginning of this process. Chronic unemployment and spending time in a sheltered workshop for a disability pension of perhaps \$5,000 a year and maybe up to \$10 a week can in no way be imagined as satisfying or productive.

Goal 13: "Develop values related to personal, ethical or religious beliefs and to the common welfare of society."

The operative word here is "common." Typical people and people with special needs are carefully taught that they belong to separate communities, one functioning and one custodial. Typical people have been denied the opportunity to grow up alongside their peers with special needs, to learn with them, to work with them and be their friends. Our community is denied the talents and contributions of thousands of its members.

People with special needs refuse to be streamed away from the community. They belong simply because they are here. They want to learn, play, work and contribute to the community. They do not want the protectionism and paternalism which they are offered and which they know to be soul-destroying. They want integration, human and civil rights, personal choice and reasonable accommodation.

The Ministry of Education must decide and then teach, in a proactive manner, that all belong. We support a philosophical foundation for education in Ontario promoting one community with a common interest in its own communal preservation, welfare and progress, respecting and appreciating human diversity.

With respect to persons who will require some extra supports, we advocate a philosophy which believes that all persons have the right and capacity to lead what we call normal lives. What is a normal life? It is going to school with your friends. It is having friends outside of school in your neighbourhood. It is having hobbies. It is getting a job, moving away from home, establishing your own family setting and contributing to the community. All people are capable of that.

Persons with special needs have been protected from the dignity of risk in the system and so have been blocked from reaching their potential and leading typical lives, albeit with varying levels of support. Their lot has been chronic poverty on social assistance, social isolation and the devaluation of their abilities, talents and desire to contribute and belong.

Our educational system and community cannot continue to waste precious human lives. We are saying to you that you will not waste our children's lives.

Mrs. Dolmage: What is the reality? As long as geography and religion continue to be the major determinants of quality of education, this province has a long way to go to provide equal opportunity for all children to meet basic educational needs.

The discriminatory manner in which most students with special needs are currently treated by school boards has a double negative effect:

1. The labelled students are deprived of quality education and introduced to lives of poverty, isolation, unemployment and a succession of services.

2. The typical students learn to perpetuate these discriminatory practices.

The present education system stresses segregation versus integration, labels versus individuals, placement versus people and efficiency versus quality. It even allocates money to categories, not kids. Some school boards make a pretence of complying with ministry regulations by offering what is euphemistically called a "range of options," which implies choice; but the reality is that there is no choice. Either all the options are bad, or the unwritten but strictly enforced corollary is that each option applies only to a specified type of student.

The phrase "appropriate education" is being narrowly interpreted by appeal boards to refer only to a board's existing services. Thus, if a student requires a program, placement or service that a particular board does not offer, he or she is denied the right to a truly appropriate education. The act pays mere lip service to the role of parents in the educational process. While it sometimes invites parents to attend meetings about their children, it ensures that such meetings, especially in the appeal process, are controlled by professionals. These fundamental injustices are not tolerable as a value base for a system that proclaims equality of opportunity.

In attempting to redress the inequities inherent in the current legislation, each of the three groups represented here today prepared detailed recommendations for amendments to the Education Act and regulations in response to the minister's request for reactions to the proposed amendments to the special education legislation in January 1986. Over two years later, the amendments have not even reached the Legislature, let alone brought about any positive changes in our children's lives. We are waiting.

Meanwhile, many parents have been forced to take drastic steps to avoid having their children damaged by being forced into segregated settings, steps such as opening their own schools; changing their religion; enrolling their children in private schools at great personal expense; leaving jobs and family and friends behind to move to a school area where integration is available; keeping their children at home and teaching them themselves; retaining lawyers and spending thousands of dollars fighting an appeal system that is stacked against parents and children, or being required to volunteer inordinate amounts of time at school because their children have special needs.

Clearly, none of these measures should be necessary in an education system that purports to offer equality of opportunity. We offer the following recommendations as a means to bring about what should be the basic right of every student to a good education. †

Recommendation 1: That the proposed amendments to the special education legislation be introduced to the Legislature as a priority item in the fall session in order that they may go to committee and public hearings as soon as possible.

Recommendation 2: That the Education Act be amended to ensure that all students, regardless of exceptionality, have the right to be educated in regular classes in their home schools—that is, the schools they would be attending if they were not labelled "exceptional"—with their chronological-age peers, and that supplementary supports and services be provided to exceptional students in integrated classes, as required, to meet individual program goals.

Recommendation 3: That a significant preamble to the Education Act be written which will clearly define its value base and provide a detailed statement of principles. It should include the role of education in enhancing community membership; the right of families to meaningful participation in their children's educational careers and to a fair appeal process; the basic assumption that all children can learn and develop; the principles of normalization and integration as the operating frame of reference for students with special needs; the consideration of individual strengths and needs, not labels, as the criteria for planning individual programs; the right of all children to an education that will prepare them to live and work in the real world, rather than in artificial, sheltered environments; the responsibility of educators to respect and value their students; a recognition that an

appropriate education means one that is geared towards meeting a student's individual needs and is not limited by a board's existing service delivery model.

In the pursuit of independence, academic goals may not necessarily take precedence over social and personal goals. The school has a responsibility to help students progress in all three areas of development.

1030

Recommendation 4: That all references to special education be deleted from the Education Act, regulations, ministry and school board documents and policies, teacher training courses and qualifications, etc.

We need to debunk the notion apparent in our present approach that two systems of education are necessary, regular and special. As Mrs. Bailey has pointed out, separate is inherently unequal.

The critical philosophical question is deceptively simple. Do we, as a society, value people who have special needs or do we not? Do we value all people?

All children require educational programs and services and deserve to receive them in their home schools. Until a commitment is made to this basic principle, the rights of children currently labelled "exceptional" will continue to be denied as they suffer the status of second class citizens in this province.

Mrs. Langdon: We have a brief video to show you that I think I will cut off at some point. Sometimes people say, "Can this really happen?" Yes, it can really happen.

[Audio-visual presentation]

Mrs. Langdon: Now this lady talks about the support the other teacher has already talked about so I am just going to whip past that section in the interest of time. But you can see a child and what is happening to the child.

[Audio-visual presentation]

Mrs. Langdon: We have one boy at the end that we are particularly enthusiastic about and we have to show you this.

In the interest of time, would it be OK to throw out a couple of questions now while I am doing this.

Madam Chairman: Certainly. The only thing is that Hansard cannot pick up your comments unless you are directly in front of the microphone.

[Interruption]

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That noise was not me clearing my throat.

Mrs. Langdon: This is the part we were waiting for.

[Audio-visual presentation]

1044

Mrs. Marinec-Jaffer: It is interesting to note that the film ends with this young man going to community college and we watch him going and taking his books. So I think the point is well taken.

Mr. Chairman: We have slightly less than 10 minutes left.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Welcome everybody. It is nice to see you again. I am glad you were able to come. Just a couple of comments if I might for new members who have not been here for many years, they will not know all the work that this combination of groups have done with members trying to educate them around this issue. Unfortunately, some of their key spokespeople in the House were defeated last time and are not around now to take their role. I think of Evelyn Gigantes and David Warner in particular. I am hoping that over the next few months you will get to know these groups well. As their first recommendation says, they will try to put on as much pressure as they can to finally get the special education act back before the House. A lot of us have been waiting a long time for this to happen.

I think one of the things I like most about the notion of your presentation is—and it is a theme that has been coming up in other terms recently—the theme that comes up that all the goals that have been set down for education by the ministry—the 13 goals—are very individualistic and they are all focused on what clearly is going to be the average kid, it seems to me.

I have been asking a lot of my questions in terms of the need to look at more sort of collective social goals for education as well. In particular, I was talking about poverty. There are poor kids who do not make it through the system and who continually get lumped low and streamed low and that kind of thing, but what I liked a lot about your notion is that you bring a very collective philosophy to education, but from a different angle than I was taking it before, and that is that the community as a whole needs to be represented in the schools, as well, and that kind of acceptance and social acceptance of all groups is crucial to the education and thence the wellbeing of our society in the future, as well. I just want to say I really appreciate that notion.

I wonder if I can ask you a couple of difficult questions that are always asked of me by people who are opposed to full integration just to get

some of your responses to it. The first major one I always get is from parents of bright kids who look at exceptionality from the other end and want their kids separated to accelerate their growth in the school system. Can you give me a response that you would give to the parents of bright kids in terms of why an integrated schoolroom setting is better for their kids than what they want, which is the advanced course selection, etc. and the separation of that elite?

Mrs. Langdon: The very quick answer is that we have parents in the integration action group who are also parents of children who are labelled bright or gifted and they do not want that. They want the same thing as we want; they want their children to be integrated in regular classrooms for all the same reasons that we have mentioned before. That is the very quick answer but if somebody would like to do a longer one—

Mrs. Bailey: I think when we talk about children with this exceptionality at the other end of the spectrum, we talk about individualizing and enriching a focus on the individual needs and I think we really see the same approach being taken with children who are labelled bright, that there is no reason why within a classroom, with support, the teacher cannot enrich a program. I think also children at various levels of ability around different subjects, different issues, can often interact and teach and learn from each other, and I think that is an enriching experience.

But over and above all this meeting individual programming goals, I think we have to look at the overall good of the collective, and it is good for all of us that kids who are bright and who might go out there and be people who start businesses and get things going, grow up with people who have varying levels of ability and appreciate that kind of thing so they make room for them.

We think of people who are bright and streaming them off as high achievers, but they leave the rest behind and lock them out. So I think for the collective it is a good experience as well.

Mrs. Langdon: Another thing to point out is that usually parents of children who are labelled bright have options and the thing that we are most concerned about here today is that we do not have options. If your child is bright and you say, "Sorry, I do not want him to go to the segregated class," nobody yells and screams at you or puts you through an appeal process. They say, "Fine" and that is the end of it. We cannot do that; they can. We are asking for the same choices they have.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That sort of answers one of my other short questions which is, a lot of parents with deaf kids want the choice rather than necessarily an integrated system. Some of them, in terms of taking the Gallaudet style approach to their self-expression and acting as a community on their own, would prefer that rather than to move into an integrated setting, but I gather from what you are just saying that a real choice is really what you want in the system.

Mrs. Langdon: Absolutely.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Another thing is that we have some boards in Ontario, which I hope the committee gets to see as we go further on, that actually are doing this, as you said. But I have had some concerns registered to me, especially from teachers, although from some parents too, in the Wellington separate system and in Hamilton where this sort of thing has been done now for a number of years, about what the reality is in the classroom in terms of the resources that are really provided. What is happening is that the teacher often is left with as many students as he or she ever had before and the resource specialist becomes this new little elite in the school system that sort of circulates around, really is not present in the classroom on a regular basis. They become increasingly reliant on sort of teacher aid parents in the classroom rather than really having access to the kind of resources that are necessary. Therefore, everybody is being hurt by the lack of resources. I wonder if any of you can comment about that.

1050

Mrs. Dolmage: I would just like to make a comment that I think there needs to be some provincial control and understanding of how boards in the province are delivering services to kids. The board that I left in Muskoka identifies between 20 and 25 per cent of its students as exceptional and provides resources for those students by segregating them, transporting them throughout the area, depleting small schools of even enough students to survive in the name of special education. It is an incredible expense and abuse of resources, I believe.

The neighbouring board to which I have moved identifies three per cent of its students as exceptional and is providing for them by providing resources before withdrawal, so that resources can be delivered to the regular classroom for all the students so that there can be a more individualized approach for all the students in that regular classroom.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am be glad to defer in the interests of time.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. I appreciate that, since we do have five members who have indicated they wish to ask questions. With approximately two minutes left, I have a feeling we are going to go over in our time, which we are certainly willing to do.

Mr. Reycraft: Like Mr. Johnston, I too have had a number of opportunities to dialogue with the individuals in the group before us this morning. It is nice to see them back in the Legislature and here before the select committee.

I have a couple of questions that I want to put forward, though. In the first part of your formal presentation, you referred often to forced segregation and mandatory segregation as something you view as undesirable. Yet later in your recommendations, you talked about eliminating all references to special education. That somehow implied to me that we were looking at the other extreme, which is forced integration.

I am trying to just get a handle on exactly what the group is saying. Do you agree that parents should have choice with respect to whether or not their kids are integrated into regular programs or whether they are in segregated classes, or do you think that integration should be mandatory for all kids?

Mrs. Marinec-Jaffer: Because we have suffered from mandatory segregation, I do not think we can then in fairness say to all parents, "You must integrate your child." We believe from our own experience, and our own groups believe, that integration leads to a better way of life for our children, so it is our preference, but we do not feel it has to be mandatory for all students.

When we talk about taking the "special" out of "special education," what we are really talking about within the framework of integration is allowing the special education services, in which we do believe—we do believe they have some value; they have things to offer—but taking these services out of a slot that streams and gives children specific labels means that they are available to all students in the classroom. So the special education resources can, in a typical classroom, be used for specific programming around, say, a couple of children who have specific needs and really do require extra support.

Within a typical classroom, there are always another five to 10 children who are floating around needing extra supports, in either some academics or social kinds of things, emotional supports. Those children who are in the regular stream have not really been able to get access to

special education services because they have not been labelled. What we want to do is make those services available to all the children in that classroom.

Certainly there will be parents who for some reason or another will want their children to be segregated, and I suppose that they have to make that decision; but certainly for the children with the labels that we have experience with, we feel that for our children and for our communities integration is what is necessary so that our children come out at the other end well served.

Mr. Reycraft: If we followed your fourth recommendation and eliminated all references to special education in the Education Act and teacher training courses and so on—by the way, I hope I am not addressing this line of questioning because I feel threatened that you have asked for withdrawal of my own specialist certification, but how would we be able to provide the segregated special education services for those parents who wanted that service for their children?

Mrs. Marinec-Jaffer: I suppose—and you are asking me really to fantasize—if all classes had special education services available to them, then any class that was operating under the auspices of the school board would be entitled to those services, whether they were segregated or integrated. Do you understand what I said?

Mrs. Dolmage: We are suggesting that it is artificial to say there are some regular students and there are some special students and therefore all services in every school board in the province should be divided right down the middle somehow. What we are saying is that the most important label for any student is his own name, his own description and his own needs and strengths, not a category that puts him on either the special side or the regular side.

Really, the best kind of education system does not bother with that, which is costing an incredible amount of money when you consider how many students are identified and just slotted into one system or another. What we are saying is the best system talks about the individual in the classroom.

Mr. Reycraft: One other question, if I may, and it follows the line of Mr. Johnston's questioning. Does what you are advocating not require all teachers to be skilled and trained in dealing with the needs of all children? That is certainly not the situation we have at the present time within the system in the province.

Mrs. Langdon: As a teacher, I would like to answer that one, if I may. I think one of the

parents in the film indicated the same kind of thing. There is a myth out there that there are all these experts who know all kinds of things. I have taken all the special education courses and I would be qualified right now to go to a school board and say, "Would you hire me to be superintendent of all your special ed teachers?" I know much more about teaching kids with special needs from having spent five years with my daughter than I do from the special ed courses.

I am not faulting the courses per se, but it is your personality, it is your humanity, it is who you are, it is how you think, it is how you are able to work with a class, how you are able to divide kids up, how you are able to think and program and plan. I think it is the strength of your convictions, your belief that these children have a right to be here. Those are the kinds of things that will help a teacher integrate a kid. It is the attitudes and that kind of thing which are going to make much more difference than all the special ed courses in the world.

Mr. Reyecraft: I do not argue with what you say, but is it not unrealistic to assume that all teachers would be able to deal with kids with those needs as ably as you are?

Mrs. Langdon: Oh yes; and Dr. Woronko will talk about that.

Dr. Woronko: I would like to add to that. A teacher who is receiving a student with challenging needs in his or her class receives, if the system is working properly, support for the needs of that student, so that teacher does not have to be aware of the needs of all other students, of all exceptionalities and all the variances that can occur. He has to be told only about what this particular student needs. This is how it has worked out in practice. It is getting to know the individual and getting assistance from the resources of the school board in serving that student.

Mrs. Marinec-Jaffer: I think that because each of us has had the pleasure, and I mean that sincerely, of living with a child who has been labelled exceptional, we know that while the label—if you go to an expert or a book which says, "What does it mean to have Down syndrome? What does it mean to have autism?" and then you read all these things about what this could be like, it is a terribly frightening and discouraging kind of thing.

But when you live with a child who has one of these labels and play with other children and learn to love him, then you realize this whole frightening myth of differentness is really a

myth. All it basically means is that some kids need some help to talk, some kids need some help to walk, some need some strategies for learning and some need some help in making connections to other kids.

The myth of this differentness, which is promoted by all this segregation and our medical community, is very frightening. That is why parents get so frightened initially when a child is sometimes born into their family, because we were also sold stuff about how different these people are. But they are not, they are the same as us. The kinds of things that get us up in the morning and make our lives good and the things we want to achieve for ourselves are the same for them. It is no different.

Mr. Villeneuve: I sat on another committee with my colleague Mr. Johnston. I have seen this group here before and quite obviously it did not bear a lot of fruit. Let's hope his visit this time does bear fruit.

Two of you this morning suggested that the public system was not able to meet the particular requirements as you saw them. I would like you to expand a bit. Why was the separate system able to accept children labelled as different or special, yet the public system saw difficulty there? Is there a different mechanism? Is there a different philosophy? Could you in not too many hours explain to this committee why this happened?

1100

Dr. Woronko: I will address that. One of the things we think is the reason is that the separate school boards have started somewhat later in establishing classes for students with special needs. Many of them previously purchased services from public school boards, so they were starting completely from scratch. They had no vested interest in established bureaucracies, so they were a lot more flexible in the way they would approach it; whereas school boards that have superintendents of special education and many psychologists have established segregated schools as well as segregated classes. They have an investment there in philosophy, resources and so on and it is very hard for them to say: "We have established a special school here and somebody does not want to go to it. We think it appropriate that the students goes there." There is that tradition.

Also, there is a component, I think, in that some of the Catholic school boards are practising what they preach. Some of them have this philosophy that all children belong and they try to do their best to make sure the various disabled

children have the opportunity to be alongside their typical peers.

Mrs. Langdon: I think it is important for you to realize too that this is not a public/separate issue. This happens to be in one particular region that Sam and I both live in where we have that option. However, there are lots of separate boards that are not integrating kids and there are beginning to be probably three public boards that we know of that are starting maybe a pilot project, one or two kids here and there. There are two or three that are very slowly beginning to integrate a few kids; so this is not a Catholic/non-Catholic issue.

Mr. Villeneuve: If I hear you right then, we are talking about a very inflexible inside hierarchy within systems that do not want to be disturbed.

Mrs. Marinec-Jaffer: Yes.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much for coming today. We did have a number of other members who have questions, but unfortunately, we have long ago run out of time and we do have several other presenters who are patiently waiting. In fairness, I think we will go on to the next. Thank you for coming. I do urge any members who have questions that have not been answered to contact Lynda Langdon or any of the other members of the group and I am sure they will be more than willing to offer us additional information.

Mrs. Langdon: We would be. We have put our phone numbers on the front of the brief, so please do not hesitate to call any of us. We have a little gift for you. Unfortunately, Random House ran out of copies of this book, but we are going to be getting several more copies and we will be sending one to each of you. In the meantime, Andrea would like to present this to you. The rest of the members will receive one when Random House gets its stock. This tells the story of integration.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much, Andrea. That is lovely. This takes me back to my younger days.

Mrs. Langdon: It tells our story very simply.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. It was very kind of you to know that the members sometimes need things done in a very articulated and very clear manner. While you have certainly done that, this will be the clincher.

Mrs. Langdon: It is not meant to be an insult, really. It is a very good book.

Madam Chairman: I think there are a number of us who have grown up on Sesame Street; so we certainly do not consider it an insult.

Thank you very much. Would the City of Toronto Residents' Liaison Committee on Assessment Reform come forward. Thank you very much, gentlemen. Please introduce yourselves. I know Mr. Milbrandt from past discussions and meetings, but perhaps you would like to introduce yourselves for purposes of electronic Hansard and then begin whenever you ready.

I do notice that you have quite an extensive brief. In the interest of time, so that the members will have sufficient time at the end to ask questions, you might like to précis certain parts rather than present it as is, but I will certainly leave that up to your discretion.

CITY OF TORONTO RESIDENTS' LIAISON COMMITTEE ON ASSESSMENT REFORM

Mr. MacGregor: Thank you. My name is Storm MacGregor.

Mr. Ritch: My name is Dale Ritch, from ward 3, in the west end of the city of Toronto.

Mr. Milbrandt: I am George Milbrandt from ward 10. We are all members of the City of Toronto Residents' Liaison Committee on Assessment Reform.

Mr. MacGregor: Madam Chairman and members of the committee, the Residents' Liaison Committee on Assessment Reform was appointed last year by the city of Toronto with representation from all the city wards. The reason we are here now, appearing before a provincial committee that deals with education philosophy and fundamental goals, is because we believe that a review of education philosophy and fundamental goals can only be meaningful if the resources to make it a reality are dealt with at the same time.

To illustrate the point we want to make in terms of extra burdens that many boards face, we only have to focus on the need for special language programs in Metropolitan Toronto.

Metro school boards do not have the resources to provide adequate English-as-a-second-language service. The local boards have to find the funding from property taxes, but can only stretch that resource so far. More than 5,000 students in Scarborough alone did not get the language assistance they needed last year because of lack of funding.

Twenty five per cent of all refugees and immigrants who come to Canada each year settle in Metro Toronto. Last year, almost 4,600 students who could not speak English enrolled in Toronto schools. In North York, 18,000 students require special English programs; 4,500 are refugees who often need extensive and expensive

training in adjusting to Canada before you can even begin to teach them English. The cost of providing these services has not been isolated.

Special language programs are only an example of extra burdens many boards face. The city of Toronto's tax base is also funding a long list of other very important and very expensive programs. There are programs for the deaf, programs for the orthopaedically handicapped, programs for illiterate adults and programs in special vocational training, to name a few.

Many of these programs are used by other municipalities within Metro through a system that allows them to purchase this service for a transfer fee. This transfer fee may not come even close to covering the cost; we do not know because of the accounting system.

We have three basic objectives in this context:

1. The quality of education should be the same in every municipality in Ontario; it should not depend on the local property tax base.

2. Funding for education should reflect the individual taxpayer's ability to pay.

3. Local government services should continue to be administered by locally elected officials, regardless of the proportion of funding provided by the provincial or federal level of government.

1110

Our recommendations are based on the Report of the Commission on the Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education in Ontario, the so-called Macdonald report of December 1985.

We support the recommendation that the government of Ontario affirm its financial commitment towards the funding of education and that it move towards contributing 60 per cent of the approved costs: recommendation 23 of the Macdonald report.

We also support the recommendation that the government of Ontario introduce an education property tax credit program for residential and farm ratepayers and that the program be financed by an education tax on personal income: recommendation 24 of the Macdonald report.

We oppose the recommendation that the government of Ontario require that payment in lieu of taxes be shared equitably among school boards and municipalities: recommendation 17 of the Macdonald report.

We suggest instead that a review of the current situation should be undertaken and payments in lieu of taxes should continue to be made to the municipalities where these facilities are located until the issue of funding for education and the problem of property taxes have been resolved.

In addition, we oppose the recommendation that the province determine each year commercial and industrial assessment mill rates which will yield the total local revenues accruing from the current levies on such assessment, that such local revenues be used to calculate general legislative grants payable to school boards up to the provincial level of expenditures and that such mill rates be adjusted annually: recommendation 21 of the Macdonald report.

We suggest instead that the report on pooling that was completed last fall by a special committee set up to study the impact on the school boards should be released by the Ministry of Education and a review of Metropolitan Toronto pooling should be undertaken.

These are my comments. Dale Ritch will continue from here.

Mr. Ritch: Actually, that was the brief we submitted, a brief brief. The rest of the notes there are like an addendum, which the committee members might like to go over later on at their leisure. They explain the issues we have raised here.

I just want to give you a bit of background first about our committee and how we ended up discussing education finance and education philosophy. Our mandate initially was to deal with property tax reform and market value reassessment. If it is OK with the chairman, I will just take a minute here to explain the background.

We got started about a year and a half ago with the proposal to bring in market value assessment in Metro. Home owners in the city of Toronto feel quite threatened by this proposal. It is a very irrational system, really, to finance education through property taxes. The property tax is not based on the ability to pay at all. It is not based, for instance, on the equity you have on your property.

As you know, poorer people and working people tend to have almost all of their investments tied up in their homes. Property tax, for instance, is not based on services received for the tax and is subject to very wild fluctuations in the real estate market. The home owners, in working with our staff and the politicians in the city, were looking for new ways of reforming the property tax system to make it fairer and more rational.

Our staff and the city of North York developed a unit assessment system to replace market value assessment, a system which has great promise. The idea is to base the taxes on a formula which is based on square footage and lot size. This would be a more rational system, one that was using

these items as proxies, you might say, and would not be subject to the wild fluctuations of the real estate market.

Therefore, we came around to a discussion on education and education finance inevitably because, of course, as we know, more than half of property taxes go to pay for education. In fact, in many municipalities around the province, even over 60 per cent of the property tax load goes to finance education.

We in the city and other people in the province have a great concern now about the future of our education system. We see that a crunch is coming. We see that right now the economy is booming and revenues are flooding in, but this situation could change very rapidly. We know that in fact the economic boom in Ontario could be over within six months or a year.

We also know that we have now extension of funding, with full funding to the separate school system, we have two large systems to fund and we are wondering if the money is going to be there to do that when all the bills come in. As we know, some of the bills are still coming in, so we are very concerned about the future of the education system in this province.

We went through the reports and we took a look at the Macdonald commission report, which is probably one of the most important government documents that has been released in Ontario in a great many years. There has also been an interministerial task force which was supposed to release its recommendations regarding the Macdonald commission's recommendations last December.

We wonder what happened to this interministerial task force and its recommendations. We heard that they were delayed because they had to go back and go over the numbers again. With the pledge made by the current government to reduce class size and add 4,000 more teachers, apparently the numbers are all thrown off. But here we are almost a year later heading into a very important municipal election in Metro and for some reason these recommendations have not come out.

We think it is time these recommendations did come out, because this is really dealing with the crux question in the area of quality and philosophy of education: which is are the dollars going to be there next year and the year after? We are really wondering if there is not some kind of crunch that is coming around the corner once we get around the municipal election this fall.

I would like to now quickly argue our case for a removal of the residential portion of property tax. I want to make this clear. We are talking

about removing the residential proportion of property tax which pays for education and which currently accounts for about 32 per cent of the total burden of paying for education. One third of that approximately comes from residential and farm property taxes.

The Macdonald commission has the best arguments here. I am just going to quickly reiterate a couple of paragraphs because I think the report makes the arguments very well:

"In one alternative that we pondered, we sought to replace the residential property tax with a tax that would ensure equal sharing of the burden of funding according to ability to pay. Such an alternative tax, we thought, could take the form of a special charge on an individual's personal income.

"The main arguments in favour of raising funds for education from a tax on personal income relate to the principle of fairness. Such a tax is perceived to be more equitable than one on property; because every individual benefits from the excellence of Ontario's educational system, everyone would pay in accordance with the increase or decrease on his or her command over goods and services during the year."

I might add that now with the new federal tax brackets—I believe we are down to three tax brackets—the talk about replacing property tax with income tax is not quite as debatable an issue. It does not alarm quite as many people because the top brackets have been reduced quite a bit.

"The special charge on personal income would make individual contributions to education more visible than at present. One household might contribute several times over through its number of wage earners rather than its assessment as the property of one individual. An income tax could be collected through regular payroll deductions, and it represents a broader tax base while enhancing universality."

That is an important point to make. The current property tax is levied on the house. You could have five or six wage earners living in that house or you could have no wage earners living in that house. In fact, in the city of Toronto there are 5,000 homes that are owned by seniors who qualify for the guaranteed annual income system and therefore the \$100 tax credit that the city gives them every year, the tax rebate. So such an income tax would mean a great expansion of the tax base and is very logical and rational from that point of view.

Finally, from the Macdonald commission: "The potential for income redistribution based upon a shift to a more equitable sharing of the tax

burden is significant. It would also soften the impact of the property tax upon families at a stage when a high proportion of their disposable income goes into housing."

Then the Macdonald commission went into greater detail on exactly how the proposal would work. It is a very rational proposal. They are proposing that, based on 1985 figures, if you applied an income tax that was tied into the federal and provincial income tax systems and if you wanted to replace the proportion of educational funding that is based on the residential and farm property tax, you would require only a 1.4 per cent increase in personal income tax.

1120

Another of our recommendations is that the level of direct government funding of the education system should be increased and restored to its level of 60 per cent. If this were done, in fact, and you tied this into the income tax proposal, you would need only a 0.8 per cent increase in personal income tax, raising something like \$1.4 billion per year. That is based on 1985 dollars, so you would have to adjust that up because there have been some changes. But this is a very rational proposal that we are making; it is not a wild, pie-in-the-sky proposal.

I would just like to remind you who H. Ian Macdonald was. He was a former Deputy Treasurer under Darcy McKeough and he is a person who certainly could not be considered to be extravagant or profligate or anything like that. This is certainly a proposal which is worthy of your consideration and the province's consideration.

Just speaking briefly to our other recommendations; again I have talked about getting government direct spending on education up to 60 per cent. I just want to run through the other recommendations quickly. They do form a coherent package. Mr. MacGregor launched what our objectives were. Our objectives are primarily that we think the same level of education should be available to every person in the province and it should not depend upon the largess and richness of the local tax base.

The second proposal was the income tax proposal. The third proposal is an issue that some of the committee members might not be too aware of, but this is a very important issue. This is the question of payments in lieu of taxes. There has been some debate about this in a few articles in the paper. For instance, Canada Post is selling off a lot of its very valuable property. There are several hundred million dollars a year in grants given by the provincial government to municipi-

palities in lieu of property taxes. Just to explain what this is, there are many buildings in the city, Metro and the province that are owned either by various levels of government or by charitable nonprofit organizations that do not pay property taxes. What happens is the government gives grants in lieu of those taxes.

We are starting to look at this in the city. We have asked our city staff to come up with some figures on this, but we are feeling that basically these grants in lieu of taxes do not cover the services that are provided these properties at the present time: for instance, garbage collection, fire protection, police protection; a whole bevy of services. In fact, they are not paying the way. The grants in lieu of taxes do not cover those. Toronto and Metro have the vast majority of this type of assessment, as you can understand what with all the government institutions, etc., and, of course, all the large, nonprofit charitable organizations, opera houses and all these schools. There is a whole bevy of all kinds of institutions.

If you look at real market-value figures in Toronto and Metro, you are probably talking billions and billions. Of course, these things are all assessed very low. What the government is proposing to do, and has already taken steps to do, and what the Macdonald Commission on the Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education is proposing to do, is instead of giving those grants in lieu of payments to the local municipalities that actually provide the services, they are talking about taking the grants and spreading them all over the province.

In this way they are cutting back our tax base in the local municipalities and they are raising our costs. They are forcing our property taxpayers to pay for the cost of serving these forms of property. We think this is very unfair and we think this situation should be reviewed. We think, in the very least, the city should be reimbursed for the cost of servicing these nonprofit and government-owned properties. That is a very important issue which has not been directly addressed, but it is there behind the scenes.

I guess I will finish and then we can take any questions. Would that be fine?

Madam Chairman: That would be fine.

Mr. Ritch: Because I am just going to address the final point, and then we would be glad to take any questions. Mr. Milbrandt might want to add a few words at this stage; I am not sure, but we will give him his chance.

The fourth point, again, is a very critical issue here that raises the whole question of whether our

education system is going to be able to cut the mustard, so to speak. This raises the whole question of the funding of education. This is the pooling recommendation, recommendation 21 in the Macdonald report. Again, this is something that has come up previously and it has been debated. It was first proposed by Bette Stephenson under a different government a few years ago in Ontario.

This is the proposal that, basically, the provincial government take over the commercial and industrial assessment base in the province by taking over the function of levying the mill rate. This, in fact, would cost Metro, in the first term, something like \$25 million, which is a fair amount of money. That is just the tip of the iceberg, because what you have here is that once the province sets the mill rate on a commercial-industrial assessment base, then it is gone from the municipality. That is basically where municipalities right now have independence and control over their activities through the right to set mill rates on commercial and industrial assessment categories.

This is very important, and we are opposing the recommendation of the Macdonald commission. We are suggesting that the current pooling should be opposed and that, therefore, the local municipality should retain control over the commercial and industrial assessment base.

In closing my remarks, the Macdonald commission report is a very rich sort of report. It certainly should be studied keenly by anybody who is interested in education and education finance. These recommendations are forthcoming by the government very shortly. I have a feeling that as soon as the municipal election is out of the way, probably the recommendations will come forward and there will be action taken, perhaps precipitously.

We are supporting some of the Macdonald commission recommendations and opposing others. The whole point is that the whole outline of the education system as we know it will be affected by this debate that takes place on these recommendations which will soon be forthcoming, so we think it very much in order here today for us to raise these issues for your committee's perusal and we thank you very much for having us here.

Madam Chairman: No further comments? OK. We have Mr. Mahoney to start off, followed by Mr. Johnston.

Mr. Mahoney: I should say off the bat that I went through a section 63 in my municipality and take somewhat of a different viewpoint of section

63 than perhaps your group does. We are not here really discussing that. We are here discussing the philosophy of education. One of the concerns that has been expressed by school boards, maybe not officially but unofficially by trustees, has been that anything that takes away their ability to generate their own funds on the property tax would then, in reality, take away their autonomy.

The concern is that if the provincial government, through whatever source—whether it be income tax or the general revenue fund of the Treasury; whatever it happens to be—takes over 100 per cent, for example, of the funding, or even move much higher than the stated goal of 60 per cent, they are going to lose authority. They seem to be frightened about this and I just wonder if you have any experience with that or have any comments about it.

Mr. Ritch: Yes. The school boards are not going to support this proposal. We are aware of that. I think anybody working in the educational institutions probably would not be too fussy. Let us face it, the status quo is always preferable to any changes for people who work for institutions. The way we feel is that the status quo is no longer valid, changes are in the pipeline and there are drastic changes coming. The autonomy that the boards talk about through the current system is really a very circumscribed autonomy which is greatly limited. There have, for instance, been limits put on the local levy, the ability to raise extra funds. It largely has to come out of residential property taxes now.

We feel that the proposal we are making still retains the right of local school boards to have a certain degree of autonomy. We think the important thing about the proposal is that the emphasis would not be placed on the residential mill rate, which seems to be the inevitable conclusion if you do not go in the direction we are advocating, which is to replace residential property tax with an income tax.

1130

I might add that the right to set commercial mill rates will still be available to school boards and municipalities. Perhaps there could also be some sort of a provision for an extra levy on the residential as well if this were necessary. For instance, it is interesting to note that in Quebec almost 95 per cent of education costs are directly funded. In fact, they have accomplished in Quebec what we are proposing here. This is already the status quo in Quebec.

Because of constitutional questions in Quebec, the way they handled it was that they left a provision there—a window, you might say—

which raises I believe about five or six per cent of the total expenses that are in fact financed at the local level.

I think that kind of a provision can be dealt with, and I think that if you talk to supporters of school systems, people who pay the taxes, you would have a tremendous amount of support among the citizenry of this population for the changes that we are proposing.

Mr. Mahoney: May I just ask for clarification? This is the City of Toronto Residents' Liaison Committee on Assessment Reform, and yet in certain areas you refer to Metro and North York. Is this a Metropolitan Toronto position that you are putting forward?

Mr. Milbrandt: This is strictly a residents' liaison committee of the city of Toronto, but we have been working with the city of Toronto staff and they came up with a joint proposal, working with North York, on the unit assessment as a method of replacing the property tax assessment system that is presently in effect. That is where the linkage comes from Metro. Also, our concern relates to the fact that the city of Toronto, for example, helps support the Metro school system. In effect, more of the tax money that is collected in Toronto goes to the Metro area. It helps support it, so some of our references are at the Metro level.

Mr. Mahoney: The reason I asked about that, though, is that some of the cities and the one borough that make up Metro, it would seem to me, might have some opposing views on the commercial-industrial assessment. I would think some of them would do well and some would not. I know in my city we do extremely well because of the airport and the Gateway and a number of other things in the grants in lieu.

From the point of view of trying to steer it back to education and not to the argument of section 63, which I would be delighted to discuss with you another time, I am just wondering if they see an erosion of dollars available for education in Etobicoke, for example, as a result of this. Do you have any thoughts on that?

Mr. Ritch: As a result of our proposal? That is hard for us to say because they like getting market value assessment. I do not think they have really looked at the question of financing education the way we have. We have been forced to look at the question of financing education because we have been trying to develop a new system for collecting property taxes.

Most people have not integrated the property tax debate with financing education, which really you have to do because, as we have stated and as

you know, more than half the property taxes go to pay for the education system. I would argue that the system we are proposing would be very suitable to any urban area, for sure.

Mr. Mahoney: I have a final question on item 2 in your objectives, which states, "Funding for education should reflect the individual taxpayer's ability to pay." I guess that could be interpreted in a number of ways. I am assuming it would be incorrect to interpret it as meaning that if you can afford to pay for your child's education, he will get a good one, and if you cannot, he will not.

Mr. Milbrandt: That is correct; that is the incorrect interpretation.

Mr. Mahoney: I was hoping it was. I just wonder, though, whether you might elaborate on it a little bit.

Mr. Milbrandt: What we are saying here relates to the argument of collecting property taxes to pay for education. We feel property tax is an inequitable way to do that. It does not reflect the person's ability to pay, and yet over 50 per cent of the property taxes go to pay for education and it is done in a way that does not reflect the ability to pay.

We are suggesting that a better way to do that would be through the income tax system. That portion of the educational bill that comes from individuals should come through the personal income tax system rather than through the property tax system.

Mr. Mahoney: So it would be directly based on income and there would be a special section on the income tax form, under your proposal, as opposed to coming out of Treasury.

Mr. Milbrandt: Yes.

Mr. Ritch: It would be a third tier that would be tied into the federal-provincial system.

Mr. Milbrandt: Here is an example to show you how that might work. Macdonald goes into this quite well. On page 4, for example, of the addendum to the brief that we gave you, if you took the two recommendations that we have suggested, 60 per cent and the income tax, and if you look at option C in the table there, you will see that the 60 per cent would increase the general grants from the 46 per cent level, from \$3.1 billion to \$4.1 billion; the commercial and industrial remains the same, roughly 22 per cent, at \$1.5 billion; the farm and residential would go down from 32 per cent to 18 per cent, and 18 per cent would be the portion that would come out of the tax on individual income.

We are talking about, basically, a small portion of the overall funding, but yet done in a more equitable way and a way that we feel is a lot fairer for all parties concerned.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I guess the first thing I would like us to do, again as a committee, would be to investigate this whole question of liaison committees around the province. I know the Toronto board has a lot of them operating in policy fields and giving assistance to the board. I am not sure how much of a practice that is for the rest of the province. I wonder if we can try to find out through the Ministry of Education just how many have these kinds of committees for citizen involvement and how many do not, so we can get an idea of that kind of participation. I request that you do that for us.

The questions I have around this and why I agree it is important for us to deal with financing when we deal with philosophy is that until you know who pays and how you pay for a system, you really cannot determine what the system is going to do and who it really serves.

There are a couple of questions that come to me from what you are raising, and I would just like to get a little more information on one area. You touched on one of them a bit, Mr. Mahoney, but I will come back to that one because I am not sure you answered the question around local accountability. Maybe we can get back to that.

First, I would like to ask you about the whole notion of equality around the province, which is a principle which I would support. I think the charter would also say it is incumbent upon the government to provide equality of education.

I wonder, in reality, what that means when you look at what can be provided to a student in a small community, for instance, in northern Ontario, in a secondary school with a total of perhaps 150 or 200 students, let us say, in comparison to what can be provided to a student in Metropolitan Toronto in terms of the range of courses, the various options that can be maintained and the number of teachers that can be hired, etc. That would be the first part of that question.

The second would be the difficulty in determining what is equality when, again, it comes down to this local control question. In your initial remarks, you basically laid out the multiple ethnicity of Toronto with the huge increase in the numbers of students from refugee families, etc., every year. Part of that can be a verifiable objectionable requirement for an education need that is different from another area. Part of it can be seen, it seems to me, as a local identification

of a need or a local assessment—not necessarily objective—of what kind of education is required for that local community.

1140

I guess I am wondering how you put those things together, how you actually maintain real equality of education in a small town in northern Ontario, and second, how you measure that when a local community may say, "Our needs are not the same as this other community." Who says what are and are not basic needs in a school system?

Mr. MacGregor: I think you can only decide the local need on a local level, because you have to be sensitive and responsive to that need and you can only do that locally. At the same time, we also have to make sure that the funding is there locally. I do not think you can say that you have a community with a small population that does not have the same need as you have in Metro Toronto where you have this influx of immigrants and refugees. It is two different things, but the bottom line is, what do you end up with in education and how is that child educated to the same quality? They start out from a different point.

I think it is difficult to draw a straight line and say, this is how it is going to be here and how it is going to be there. You have to do it at a local level. You have to be sensitive locally and respond to that local need. That is why we have to have local autonomy.

Mr. Ritch: I would bring out two aspects. One is the question of guaranteed funding. A local school board running any kind of local administration has to have control over its funding. What we are proposing is a system that would give the municipalities and the school boards a certain guaranteed base of funding.

I would argue that with many of the Macdonald commission recommendations that are being discussed by the interministerial task force, if put into effect—for instance, if the pooling went in—the local school boards and municipalities would lose their control of funding, so that is very important, that you have a guaranteed level of funding.

For instance, the pressure on governments in Ontario over the last decade or two, and it does not seem to matter which government it has been, has been to continually reduce the level of spending for education. We have seen that decline from 62 per cent down to 44 per cent or something like that in the last 15 or 20 years.

I guess when you talk about guaranteed funding, you are trying to set up as much

guaranteed funding as possible, but you realize as well that for the provincial government there is a certain area where politics comes into the situation.

I think the proposal we are putting forward, by tying it into the federal and provincial income tax system, would guarantee a certain level of funding would be there. That is what we had hoped to see.

Did you have anything about that, Mr. Milbrandt?

Mr. Milbrandt: I would agree with Mr. MacGregor that in terms of quality and in terms of guaranteeing the same sort of thing from one end of the province to the other, that is an impossibility, in a sense. That is where the local trustees would have to come into the picture, because it is going to vary, depending upon need.

Our contention is that local control could still be maintained, though, through the trustees, regardless of where the funding came from. Some will still come from the local commercial and industrial, some would come through the income tax and some would come through the general base, but it still could be under the local control of the trustees.

At the present time, as I recall, there is a ratio of something like 70 per cent to 30 per cent in Toronto Transit Commission funding in terms of Metro. The funds are known in terms of the ratio. It is administered locally. The TTC knows that roughly 30 per cent of its funding is going to come from the province, yet it is still locally controlled.

The local levy is a way local municipalities within a certain framework can raise additional revenues, if they deem it appropriate.

One other thing is that ministry guides I have looked at are general in nature. Even if you have the large percentage coming from the provincial government through grants and through income tax, you still have very general ministry guides that have to be interpreted locally. That is the way the system is set up, so it seems to me it could still be handled quite well locally through local control.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I have a second question, if I could, on this. I am not sure I am getting from you what I see as a major problem in the system, even though I am very sympathetic to your recommendations.

My identified problem is that there is an obvious tension that has to exist between local control and provincial standards. I am not sure I understand the principle you are enunciating in terms of this notion of local control if and when

we remove more and more of the money, the actual raising of funds from that local municipality, to the point where it could become virtually nonexistent in some communities.

For northern boards, the reality at the moment and from what you are proposing would be that the minimum standard would be established by the province of Ontario, not by the local board. Local levies are an academic question to Swastika in northern Ontario, whereas in the city of Toronto they can raise a fair amount of money. A local levy in a small town in northern Ontario, or even rural Ontario, is a meaningless kind of gesture in terms of what you can do in enhancement of the quality of education.

What I am looking for and something I have been trying to struggle with myself is, how do we deal with this tension? If we take away the property tax base, something that I am in favour of and that I think most taxpayers are in favour of as well, how do you argue it? What are the specific rights of that local community, in terms of defining what the basic level of education should be or what additional levels of education are going to be provided because of its ability to raise a levy, that make it then that much different from other places in the province, which then skews this whole notion of equal service for constituents wherever they might be? It is that tension which I think is there that you do not seem to think is a reality.

Mr. Ritch: It is hard for us. Our field of expertise, if there is such a thing, is property tax reform. We study the system in Ontario. We have a knowledge of property. Mr. Milbrandt is a teacher at a college of education, so he has a bit of a background in education. The rest of us are not experts in education. We do not really see the problem through the eyes of trustees or teachers who work for school boards. I think there is a tendency to put too much emphasis on the threat to autonomy that our proposal is suggesting.

Right now, there are many municipalities where the property tax base is virtually nonexistent; for instance, unincorporated townships in northern Ontario. There are all kinds of school boards that are now basically directly funded. That situation exists already.

The other point I would make is that government regulation already does dictate to a great degree, a tremendous degree, the standards, etc., what kind of education the local school boards have to provide.

I think, personally, not being an expert in this, the argument about autonomy is a bit overemphasized.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is not autonomy by itself, Mr. Ritch, it is also accountability. We have a principle in our democracy that we, as elected people, are responsible for the raising of taxes for our level. The taxation question and our representation are automatically linked. That is also the case at the local level, with its range of some provincial moneys, etc., being passed down. I am just saying that, if you get away from the principle of them raising their money, what then is the principle you are basing your local accountability on?

Mr. Ritch: I am saying that we are not necessarily challenging the principle. The ideal situation we want is to see the local municipalities continuing to set the mill rate on the industrial and commercial category, which produces 22 per cent. The residential we want to see replaced. We want to see the funding guaranteed. It is going to come from the federal and provincial income taxes. It is set in there.

I guess you are sort of suggesting that our proposal is a backhand attack on the whole idea of local municipal government. Because we are giving up the right to set mills on the residential tax base, maybe you can look at it that way, but I think what is coming down the pipes is something much worse, which is to highjack the commercial assessment base and put the whole load on the residential.

Local governments are going to be in a position, as they have been in Britain, of having no place to go. Either you massively cut back on services and totally alienate your constituents in that way or else you jack up taxes and totally alienate your constituents. To our way of thinking, that is a no-win situation. I think the proposal we are making will maintain local control and local accountability and allow us to finance education fairly for every student in the province.

1150

Mr. Milbrandt: You notice in the Macdonald report that they discuss this item and how this could be carried out so that you continue to pay property taxes, but you get credits towards your income tax if you happen to be the individual. The individual still lives in the local municipality and he or she still pays taxes through property tax. They get credits back and they also pay through the income tax. It is just another way of collecting the taxes. We think it is a fairer way of collecting the taxes.

Madam Chairman: I would like to thank the members of the liaison committee for appearing before us today to give us a slightly different

angle on the goals and philosophy of education in Ontario.

Our next presentation will be by the Kingston Area School to Employment Council. Would you come forward please?

Now that you are seated, perhaps you could introduce yourselves for the purposes of electronic Hansard. Just before you begin, I would like to mention to the members that we have a brief from the Industry-Education Council/Hamilton-Wentworth in support of the Kingston Area School to Employment Council's presentation today. Unfortunately, they have sent only a few copies. We have one for each caucus and have ordered more for the rest of the members. I wanted to bring that to your attention.

KINGSTON AREA SCHOOL TO EMPLOYMENT COUNCIL

Mr. Merrin: My name is Jay Merrin. I am the chairperson for the Kingston Area School to Employment Council.

Mr. McConkey: My name is Skip McConkey and I am the executive director of the Kingston Area School to Employment Council.

Mr. Merrin: We would first like to thank you for this opportunity to share our experience with you. We would like to tell you that as a council and an organization, we are certainly at your disposal in your search for solutions to the issue of improving the quality of education in Ontario. We are delighted to have this opportunity to present to you.

I would like to begin today, first, by explaining to you why we wanted to make our presentation, and second, by giving you some background as to who we are, how we got started and what we do.

There are primarily three reasons why we wanted to present today. We are here because we believe the symptoms we see and hear about regarding students' poor skills, attitudes and habits have root causes which require a total community commitment and involvement to solve those problems. In particular, we think a major solution is better linkage between the educational system and the business community.

As a result, we want to share our experience because we believe we can and are starting to develop those links and programs that bring together business and education, which results in maximizing private and public resources and provides the much-needed environment to bring the two communities together to better understand each other's needs and problems. In turn, we believe this generates the motivation and

enthusiasm to work co-operatively towards our mutually beneficial solutions so that the educational process can and will be equipped to help our young people make a good living and a good life.

I do not know whether you are wondering about our giving you two presentations. I guess we have given you two handouts. One is a general one about some of the activities KASE is involved in and the other is a letter from our executive director talking about industry-education councils in a general sense. This is just background for your information.

The second reason we are here is that we believe community-based groups like ours can play a vital role in helping Ontario develop and keep a competitive education system which gives value for the dollar, and we want to encourage your committee to encourage the expansion of other groups like ours in other communities.

The third reason we are here is that we would like to demonstrate to you the value of our organization in creating the interface between business and the educational community in order to validate for you the importance of funding programs like the Ties to Business and Industry Incentive Fund, and to seek your support in encouraging the government of Ontario to continue this funding or to make available funding to organizations like the Kingston Area School to Employment Council, to allow them to continue to play what we think is a new and innovative role, and to continue the funding once partnerships are established and developed so that organizations like ours can be the legs in the local community to continue the relationships and make the programs work.

That is why we wanted to come today.

What I would like to do now is to tell you what we really are at KASE and how we got going. We are a nonprofit organization, established initially to facilitate the transition of young people from school to work, specifically the 60 per cent of students who go to work directly from high school.

The history is that we got started in 1984 at a local chamber of commerce think tank. The idea was presented of the need to explore ways to better link the business community with the school systems, and especially to encourage the development of better work attitudes in young people.

In 1985, a local committee of educators and business people met with the Industry-Education Council/Hamilton-Wentworth to gain an understanding of how to set up an education council. In

July 1985, a council was formed and support received from the chamber of commerce and the Frontenac public and separate boards of education. In 1985, the parties met again to obtain input for program development, which led to a joint proposal by Hamilton, North York and Kingston being made to the innovations branch of the federal Department of Employment and Immigration. Funding was approved in June 1986.

Our proposal acknowledged the impact that schools have on productivity and expressed concern about the lack of basic skills that many of the students who make the transition from school to work demonstrate in the workplace. The proposal proposed a process to evaluate the impact of school-to-work programs in communities in which they operate and to assess their success in different labour and business markets. Thus, KASE was established in Kingston to operate school-to-work programs which could be evaluated along with programs in Hamilton and North York. This then allowed for a comparison of the effectiveness of school-to-work programs under different market conditions and programs designed to accommodate different community needs.

Another factor in the evaluation has been the length of time the three programs have been operating. In this study, Hamilton, as you may know, had a well-established program, Kingston was in its infancy and North York was somewhere in between.

The results of our project will be available at the end of August 1988 and KASE's association with the project will terminate in August 1988. However, out of this developmental process, we now have an organization that is alive and well in Kingston with a strong mandate and will to carry on the goal of facilitating the school-to-work transition.

Our council consists of 18 members from across the community. We have a representative from St. Lawrence College and from Queen's University, four members from boards of education, two superintendents, the head of co-op education and the principal of one of the schools. We have four members from our local chamber of commerce. We have four people from the various levels of governments—federal, provincial, municipal and county—and we have two members from the public at large. We believe we are a well-represented cross-section of the community.

While a large portion of our funding is coming to an end with our Innovations project, we are currently funded by the Frontenac public and separate school boards through the ties to business and industry incentive fund. The Kingston District Chamber of Commerce also contributes \$5,000 a year to our funding, which we believe is a significant amount of money for an organization of our size. We think it reflects the importance which our local business community places on the education issue. That gives you some idea of our history, how we are made up and the kind of funding we have.

What we would like to do is to share with you some of the projects that we are involved in, to demonstrate the effectiveness of organizations like ours and how we believe they can assist the education process in Ontario. I would like to run through about 10 of these with you and give you some examples of some of the things we are doing.

One of the major projects we have been involved with has been assisting the Frontenac County Board of Education's adopt-a-school committee. Currently, all eight high schools in Kingston have been adopted by businesses. We have some very unique ones. I believe Mr. Keyes, as an example, represented the government at the Ontario health insurance plan adoption, which I believe was one of the first public sector adoptions in the province.

We have another unique one. We have a public and a separate school which share the same facility which have recently been adopted by the 650-member downtown business association in Kingston, which again is a unique adoption. It has been very difficult in the past for small groups like this to adopt a school, so we think this is really quite unique. We are quite excited about it, and so is the local business community. In fact, at this point in time in Kingston, we have more businesses willing to adopt schools than we have schools.

We feel that our role in developing these kinds of partnerships has been exciting but, more important, we feel that as an organization we can play a real role in maturing these adoptions so that they are not just cosmetic.

The second kind of program we have been involved in is what we call employer-educator sessions. These are usually held in the schools, and we usually bring 15 to 40 teachers together with five to six employers per panel. Considering the target market of our students, we looked at the Kingston area to decide the industries and groups that we felt these students would most

likely go to for jobs, and we decided we would bring these people into the schools.

As a result, we have the construction, hospitality, retail and automotive industries and the public sector. We have about 50 active employers who are willing to go in on any basis and speak with teachers about what is going on in industry, the kinds of skills and attitudes that are required on the part of their entry-level employees and the kinds of long-term careers that these people can have.

We have found this has created some tremendous enthusiasm on the part of the business community to want to get involved, but also we have found that the educators have really been enjoying this opportunity to meet with the business community, develop some relationships and understand in fact exactly what its problems are and how the education of the students is impacting on its ability to perform in the marketplace.

We have done the same kind of thing for students and we are actively doing the same kind of program for co-operative education teachers. As an example, we brought the hospitality people in to speak to the co-operative education teachers. We brought in a waitress, right up to the person who owned the hotel. They all had an opportunity to tell about skills and attitudes and the reasons they are doing what they are doing and how their education played a role.

Something that has been extremely important is that, as business people, we have discovered that many small businesses still think in terms of junior and senior matriculation. They would have a student arrive for employment who had a grade 12 diploma and they did not understand whether it was basic, general or advanced.

As a result of that, the superintendents of education—we call it a travelling road show—go to Rotary clubs and the various business groups in the community and explain to them exactly what is going on in terms of the various diplomas and the meaning of grade 12. As we all know, it is quite different from what it was perhaps 20 years ago, when many of the employers were in school themselves. We have found it has been a great opportunity to have an exchange between the business community and the senior educators.

In 1987, we produced a resource directory which was primarily aimed at beginning co-op teachers. We have approximately 150 industries that are listed in this directory. A co-op person or any teacher can turn to that. It is a central guide as to what businesses would be available for a wide

range of products: job shadowing, career days, short-term work experience and that sort of thing. That has taken a great deal of work.

We have a program called Females and Meaningful Employment. We were granted funding through the Ontario women's directorate to work specifically with young women who are at risk. I believe next year we have programs to go into all the schools where young women who are at risk have been identified. We are taking in a number of women role models and spending half an hour a day, whatever is required, with them. We are quite excited about the direction that program is taking as well.

Currently, we have initiated a study to determine the effects of part-time work on students. We hope to have the results of that within the next few months.

We are beginning a feasibility study to develop a school-based placement centre to help ease the school-to-work transition. I think it is well recognized in our system that the guidance departments in schools do an excellent job in helping those students who are going on to post-secondary institutions; however, there seems to be a gap in helping those students who go directly from school to work. We feel this kind of program has some potential to assist that kind of problem.

We are currently working with other industry-education councils and the faculty of education at Queen's University to try to develop teacher intern training, because we do believe it would be valuable for many teachers to have the opportunity to have work experience to better understand what goes on in the work marketplace. We are quite excited about the potential of developing that kind of program.

We are involved with typical things like facilitating career days, job shadowing, many of the traditional things that have happened on a one-shot basis in the school system. They have been over at the end of the day and that is the end of it. We seem to be acting as a clearing-house and are able to do this on an organized basis. What we are finding is that this has created great interaction between the business community and the educational community. Again, we think we have to get business and education together, doing it across the table like this. Having both business and education involved in our programs is the way to do it.

That gives you some idea of the kinds of things we do. We work through three program committees: a student-parent committee, an employer-educator committee and an adopt-a-school com-

mittee. Basically, we have looked at the problems we perceive students having in terms of knowledge, attitude, skills and habits. We see those as symptoms and we have tried to look to our program committees to work on specific root causes.

These are the kinds of programs we are involved in. We would like to encourage you folks to feel that they are important organizations, that it is a natural way to link business and industry in small communities and across the province and that it is a great way to pull the resources of business and education together. We would hope that you would consider giving organizations like ours support in the future.

I would now like to ask Mr. McConkey to give you the overview of the industry-education councils.

Mr. McConkey: In regard to the industry-education council concept, I would like to define the word "industry" as we use it. It is very generic, meaning anybody who employs people, all sectors, just so you do not have the view that industry may be just manufacturing or some other part of it.

Our mandate in Kingston is to ease the transition from school to work, particularly for those not continuing beyond high school. The ministry commitment to reduce the drop-out rate and to ease this transition is evident in the student-retention-and-transition project they have just started this year.

The student-retention-and-transition project used several other sources for its studies. One of them was the Dryden report in 1986. I am going to give you several examples of people or organizations that support this council concept. Ken Dryden said:

"Education would provide education/training to many, and a counselling/referral service to the rest, ensuring that they have a job, participate in a job creation program or do something else appropriate to their needs.

"Such a system would connect the schools to their communities, giving education access to the broader resources it needs."

1210

We think that an industry-education council helps get the community involved with education to a great degree. Alan King, in his study, was adamant about the fact that the needs of this 60 per cent are not being met.

Radwanski states on page 183: "Because the business community has an enormous stake in the quality of graduates from our education system, it makes sense for businesses of every

size to play a more active role in helping the schools to achieve the desired results. The same is true of labour unions."

I would add that the same is true of government institutions and associations. The more the community is involved, the better education system we are going to have in the schools.

The ministry, through its ties to business and industry incentive fund, encourages industry-education co-operation and interaction. KASE is an example of one organization that has been helped by that incentive funding. Other organizations that have been helped as well are the councils that are existing in Hamilton, Windsor, Niagara Falls, Durham and Scarborough. These councils all have something in common and that is that they have mandated membership requirements, and the membership requirements are that certain or all segments of the community be represented.

Conferences that have taken place just this year pertaining to industry-education co-operation include the Bridging the Gap conference, where you have people like E. Courtney Pratt, Gordon Cressy, Dian Cohen, all of whom are stating publicly that co-operation is necessary; the Mission Possible conference put on by the Ministry of Education and the Ontario Teachers' Federation, and the Ontario Co-operative Education Association conference in Waterloo.

The NAIEC, National Association for Industry-Education Co-operation, international conference coming up in September 1988 has as its main speakers Dr. Linus Wright, acting Secretary of State, US Department of Education, Roger Hamilton, the president of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Gordon Cressy, Walter Pitman and many others who are agreeing with the fact that the community should be involved.

The ministry also has just helped to put out an Industry-Education Partnership Councils Handbook. I would like to quote from the front of this:

"It is hoped that this resource manual will enable interested communities to replicate the model council described herein and develop strong local industry-education alliances.

"With the committed support and involvement of schools, businesses, labour and government, partnership councils can contribute greatly to the improvement of the total education system and the economic health of our communities." That foreword was by the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward).

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce has endorsed the industry-education council con-

cept. Tom Tidey from the ministry, in The Catholic Principal, states that in the changes that are going to take place in secondary schools "teachers will be expected to take on increased involvement in job placement. This will become an expectation of teachers beyond the existing guidance and co-op staff. They will also be expected to help students develop plans for opting back into school, according to their own educational goals for themselves and their other needs.

"Co-operative education will continue to grow" as students receive credit for work experience or some form of work adjustment program.

So you see that the support that is being garnered in several areas is becoming fairly important. New York and Florida now have legislation to provide that councils be formed to promote the co-operation. They are not encouraged there; they are legislated.

I had the privilege of watching your first speaker, Walter Pitman, on television and I found that out of the nine areas that he had of the image of an educated person, image number five was that the person should be prepared to accept and welcome change and take risks. I respectfully submit to you that these nine areas would be of benefit to any organization that is trying to run an agency as large as the Ministry of Education.

If you were to take these, particularly number five, "be prepared to accept and welcome change and take risks," this forming of councils that involve the community with the boards of education is an extremely important change that I think is going to be a real benefit to our educational system.

Mr. Pitman also said, "The corporate sector has to be engaged in education in a way that we in Canada have not been so far." Another quote of his that I found very interesting was, "The irony of education is that those who have it get more and those who do not have it get less."

My concern as an individual is that the students who are getting less now are going to continue to get more and more of the same, so that they end up being divided even further from those who have now. If we are not careful, the educational system will fail. I think personally that the educational system is doing a great job in many areas, but there is this one area we are concerned with that does need to be improved and the council structure is an important way of assisting that.

Mr. Reyecraft on this committee said on the same broadcast that schools are doing more for

students who are at the upper level of ability than ever before. I agree. Our students who are graduating and going into university are extremely well prepared, in my opinion.

I took just a few moments to pick these news articles out: "Booming Ontario Has a Lack of Skilled Workers"; "Education Heads List of the US Corporate Concern." The *Globe and Mail* says, "Schools must develop partnerships with business and industry to give students richer experience." The *Burlington paper* says different teacher training is necessary. These are all areas in which we as a council are interested and also they are areas in which other councils are interested.

We think that councils can be of assistance to already good programs. We think that we can help you bring the community together and come up with a much better program than now exists. What does a council do for you? It provides direct access for schools to all levels of government, labour, small and large business, institutions and associations. It reduces the insularity of the educational system. How else can you, as a government, get access to all sectors of the economy on a volunteer basis, simply by providing the core funding for a couple of people to bring it together and hold it together? I do not think you can. I think that the economic advantages are great.

It also promotes sharing of resources between school boards. On our council we have superintendents from both school boards that we deal with. It allows the community to share their resources with the schools and their expertise. With a council that is up and running—and in six cases now in Ontario there are six councils that are up and running—all it needs is core funding to continue. It provides a community with a better understanding of educators' problems and vice versa. I have seen this happen many times. You get a group of teachers and business people together and in the first half-hour they are ready to argue; in the first hour, they are working together on a universal problem. This is an important advantage I think.

Most of all, it is an opportunity to better serve early school leavers. I think that councils are autonomous organizations of the best kind. They give a balance of all of the community and that I think is the strong point. Thank you very much.

1220

Madam Chairman: Thank you. We have approximately 10 minutes left, and we have Mr. Mahoney and Mr. Johnston on our speakers' list.

Mr. Mahoney: Just a couple of brief questions. We had the people from the Ontario Federation of Labour here last week, and they put forward the view that the philosophy of education should be such that the people in the schools should be educated more for life roles in general rather than specific roles. That would seem to be a little contrary perhaps to your council's position. Do you work with the labour representatives in the Kingston area and do you share with them the philosophy you are putting?

Mr. Merrin: In my area, we have two labour reps on our council.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Out of how many?

Mr. Merrin: Eighteen.

Mr. Mahoney: Let me put it another way. The concern has been expressed that perhaps in certain areas of the philosophy of education we tend to steer people in certain directions. Do you see that as a problem or a positive effect, that they will get more specific training?

Mr. Merrin: I think our reaction would be that good attitudes and the basic skills of learning how to read and write seem to us to be pretty necessary for all parts of your life. We are anxious to have students make a good living and make a good life. I do not think we are suggesting that there is only one way to do that, that in high school you should be trained to run a computer and that is where you are going to get the training.

I think we are looking for people to learn life skills and learn the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic, so that if I go in and buy something I know I am getting good value and I will know if I have the correct change. If I fill out a bill and it should be \$35 and it says \$3,500, my common sense should say, "Gee, there is something wrong here." I do not think that we are going in a very different direction. But we do have people on our council who represent labour, and interestingly, as a group they are the most difficult group to try to attract to sit on our council.

Madam Chairman: Mr. McConkey, I think you had a comment on that.

Mr. McConkey: Yes, I did. I agree that life skills are very important. Having been involved with several federal government programs in the job transition field, I found mostly that the retraining was in life skills. But I would also like to point out that when students go to work full-time, one third of their waking hours are spent at work. I think it is important that they be equipped to handle that at all levels. You cannot

make an intelligent decision without having had the experience of at least some exposure to an occupation.

Mr. Mahoney: I assume you have studied the philosophy of education in your groups and looked at our Ministry of Education's sort of philosophical outlines. Let me preface my question by telling you I am very supportive, I think it is an excellent program, but is a group like yours the result of the failure of the education system to make education relevant to the young people? Are you in fact a result of the dropout problem, are you part of the solution of taking those kids when they drop out of school and have failed in the education system, or the education system has failed them, and are you trying to put the pieces back together again?

Mr. McConkey: As far as I am concerned, it is preventive more than putting pieces back together.

Mr. Mahoney: How early do you start in the education for these kids? At what age would you get involved with them?

Mr. McConkey: We really do not know. We are looking at things from a cumulative deficit which starts in the very low grades and is carried on and perhaps gives you an image of a child that is not realistic, because of his or her disadvantage at grade 1, 2 or 3, to the situation as it exists in high schools. We deal mostly with secondary schools and how to solve the existing problems, but as we mature, we will also look into that type of problem so that we will be able to speak about those types of things intelligently. Right now, I would not want to give you an opinion other than that we are aware of it, and as soon as we do a good job on the projects that we have taken on, we will be looking into other things.

Mr. Merrin: From my point of view, after being involved with the council for a couple of years now, we have been primarily dealing with the high schools, but it would seem to me that the problems that the early leavers have in terms of learning, etc., start much earlier on. We are now starting to talk about trying to take our programs down into the public school system and identify those people earlier on, to see if there are solutions at a much earlier level, so that they do not end up going to grade 9 with that cumulative deficit and then suddenly end up at a community college with the same deficit and we have a 50 per cent dropout rate.

If you look at the whole system, it seems me that you have to push it way back and start to work on it even much sooner than we have been.

I think that is the conclusion that we seem to be coming to.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I have a couple of comments. One of them is that I am a very halfhearted supporter of the notion of your councils, and I think they have some very dangerous elements to them. For instance, when you talk about this as having all segments of the population involved as part of its makeup—the partnership council—then I look at your membership and see that in a place like Hamilton there is one union involved, except for a couple of teachers' locals, and then not even all the teachers' federations are involved in that place. In St. Catharines, the Canadian Auto Workers is involved; in Windsor, it is not involved at all.

What are students going to learn from your kind of connection with the school about power relationships? Are they all going to become executives, or are some of them going to become workers on the shop floor, who should be learning a bit more about what the power relationships are in our society as well?

I look at the adopt-a-school thing, which I must say I have had some positive thoughts about. I also have some concerns about how this can be manipulated and used by specific companies. Is there one union anywhere in the province that has been involved in adopting a school in terms of talking about things from another perspective, other than that of management?

Mr. McConkey: Entry-level positions, for the most part—85 per cent of them—are at the small-business level. We are concerned with the entry-level position of those people who are not going on to post-secondary education. As a result of that, most of the people with whom we deal will not be going into union settings. It is not a factor with us. We are looking at the individual, hopefully helping to give him the versatility to deal with whatever situation he is faced with. As director, I personally do not look at it as having anything to do with power. It is an individual thing.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I think that is part of the problem that I see. When Mr. Turk from the Ontario Federation of Labour was here the other day, among some of the other things, he also said there is an incredible bias in our education system already in terms of that kind of world view, frankly. I am not sure that your kind of council does not just add to that. That is one of the problems I have.

Mr. Merrin: We encourage the people who are on our council as union people and they do participate. For example, on the student-parent

nights, they get their point of view across and they share very openly with us and at times, quite interestingly, share the same problems with their union members that employers have in terms of the skills, the attitudes and the habits that are necessary to be what they consider good members. They seem to share with us the view that it is important that the system come together in a better way to provide their workers with the kinds of skills and attitudes that they require to do the jobs that they want to have done.

At this point in time in our council—and we have some pretty outspoken people—that has not been an issue. I do not think it is one that we would walk away from if it came up. We are quite open to saying: “How do we solve this for a community-based group? There is not just one way to do it.” If they brought it up, we would try to address it.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. Just prior to going on to Mr. Beer, I think Mr. Jackson had a supplementary to Mr. Mahoney.

1230

Mr. Jackson: Just very briefly. I think, if I could just expand on the point you are making about what age is involved, you can get involved as early as 14 with an early school-leaver. I have had some experience with linkage programs that keep a student half time in school and half time with work experience on the early school-leave. They then take 15 year-olds and get special permission for employment. I think that is an element that was not intentionally missing from your presentation, but it is an element that both Radwanski wished to address and bring more attention to, as did Mr. Dryden. Not only was his report dismissed, but he was also dismissed, which is an awful shame in this province. Have you examined your councils from the point of view of their linkage programs with, I guess they are SALEP students now? They are supervised alternative learning for excused pupils, that is the official tag of the province; they were ESL, but that is English as a second language now. Are you doing some creative things in terms of part-time in school with part-time employment to help some of these identified dropouts bridge their experience, because they always end up in low-paying jobs if they have not achieved a certain skill level. Yet the school can be a partner in that development. These programs were not in vogue three or four years ago. They are done on a sporadic basis. Do you have a major commitment within your council that you can refer to?

Mr. McConkey: I think that our council realizes that the old lifeline was that you would

go to school for 12 years or whatever it was, then you would take some type of training maybe and then you would work for the next 50 years. We fully realize that it is now you go to school for a period of time, you have some job, then you have retraining, then you have another job and it changes five or six times over.

I think the question that you are asking is an extremely important one, but it cannot have a simple answer. The best way that I could answer it is that we are aware of it. It has not been presented to us as a problem yet because we are fairly young. But I am aware that several of our council members are aware of it and I am aware of it; and as soon as it comes up, yes, we would deal with it, but I do not know how because we are a council and I cannot speak for the other 18 people.

Madam Chairman: Our final question—I am sorry, did you want to say—

Mr. Merrin: I was just going to say that to some extent the student placement thing that we are trying to get going is to try to put in place some sort of systems or some assistance that could help those students into those kinds of programs; because they are not finding it, we do not think, in the typical sources, in the traditional sources in the schools now. So that kind of a program was an attempt to address what you are talking about, but we do not have a formalized one in our council. We would like to, but it requires a huge amount of manpower.

Mr. Jackson: We have one at the Halton board I would like to recommend to you which we developed over a 10-year period. It had such a social emphasis to it. We are taking kids at risk and we are putting them into a socialization process with social workers on what was missing, then we were dumping them out in the employment market. What we try to do is create a balanced bridge between all three; life skills, educational skills and employment training skills. All three parties worked in the relationship, in remediating the student into maintaining a respect for the partnership with schooling as they proceed to the job market. That was the challenge we had to come up with and that was why we developed the program. But I just wondered how extensive they were in Ontario. I know we have one in our Halton council because we helped develop it through the Halton Board of Education.

Mr. McConkey: As a matter of fact, I think Halton is the most quoted project going when it comes to that problem.

Mr. Jackson: I chaired the committee for nine years; there is a major commitment in Halton on early school-leavers.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Beer will ask our final question.

Mr. Beer: My question relates in part to what Mr. Jackson was discussing, because it seems to me that one of the benefits of organizations such as your own is that you are increasing the involvement of people who are not in the formal educational system. One of the real difficulties in my own area of York Region in trying to develop a similar body to what you have developed is that when you are then starting to deal with different governments, different ministries, different players, often it is extremely hard in getting that up and off the ground because people are sort of saying, "Well, that doesn't really fit into what, you know, we're doing," or "We're a little bit different over here."

Those early days of trying to bring something together I think can get very frustrating for people. And so, I think that is a positive thing, involving people in a way that we have not really had, or not as much as we should have had. We, too, have been struggling with the problem; and I think that the kids where you in a way can have the most immediate impact are the ones who are not going on to post secondary, whether community college or university. There are some inherent problems, even some inherent dangers in how this relationship develops, but the whole business of the way in which kids increasingly—we see it in the statistics that Radwanski had and that Dryden had, of kids who have dropped out; how to get them back.

I am talking here 14, 15, 16-year-olds and different programs that have developed to try to get kids partially back in school and into a partial work environment. One program that exists in York region that is funded by the United Way is that basically the kids are not in school but they go to a person's home and they literally learn around the kitchen table because they have, for whatever reason, been left in a state where simply to walk back into the school at whatever level is impossible and they need time to regain some self-confidence and so on.

There is a tremendous amount that has to be done, and I think you are quite right that in moving towards it we are going to need more councils. Perhaps they might in the end be somewhat different, one from the other, in terms of local areas, local needs, and it seems to me that that is a strength in the end.

One of the questions that raises, and it goes back to what Mr. Mahoney was asking in terms of in a sense the failure: does that mean, or does that reflect in part, failure of the school system? And it seems to me when you pose that question, you then ask, "Well, what is a school supposed to be doing, if anything, specifically in terms of jobs?" And I know that there are some who get very worried about, you know, look, "If we're saying the purpose of education is simply and solely to find somebody a job at the end of the nine, 10, 11, 12 or 13 years, there are some inherent dangers in that." But just on the limited experience to date, and particularly at the secondary level, has this raised, in your minds, different ways that schools without simply saying that everything that goes on in a school should be directed towards a job, are there some conclusions that you and your colleagues are coming to about that area and the ways that schools, as schools, could be doing a better job in terms of preparing young people for the work world? It may be too early.

Mr. McConkey: Well, I have a personal theory on that and that is that there is a book by Howard Gardner called *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligence*, which outlines the seven different kinds of intelligence. In that book, he states that perhaps we only deal with one or two of those in the schools. I look at what we are doing and I look at what you are doing as tremendous—not failure—opportunity. We are evolving as a nation, hopefully, and as a people, and just the fact that you are here, which you probably would not have been in 1960, under this format. I think that what we are starting to do as a group of teachers, educators, community people, is realize that there are areas that we can improve in. We can look at all of these. I think we are just now beginning to understand that maybe the old-fashioned system of a teacher standing in front of a classroom is not necessarily the best, or even desirable.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. And I would like to thank the council for appearing before us this morning. You have certainly made a valuable contribution to our committee.

Mr. McConkey: Thanks very much for the opportunity.

Madam Chairman: The committee shall stand adjourned until two o'clock this afternoon.

The committee recessed at 12:39 p.m.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The committee resumed at 2:07 p.m. in room 151.

Madam Chairman: I would like to open this afternoon's session of the select committee on education, as we continue in our review of the goals and philosophy of education.

Cet après-midi, notre première présentation sera donnée en français.

If you would like to come forward, I believe it is Ms. Lucie Boileau and Ms. Kim Morris. If you would like to begin whenever you are ready, this group is Direction jeunesse, if I have pronounced it correctly.

Mme Boileau: C'est ça.

Madam Chairman: We are looking forward to your presentation today. If you could perhaps save part of your time for questions at the end, we would appreciate it. You may begin whenever you are ready, if you would identify yourself for the purposes of Hansard.

DIRECTION JEUNESSE

Ms. Boileau: I am going to be making the presentation in French. Everyone is hooked up?

Mon nom est Lucie Boileau, je suis la présidente de Direction jeunesse; et voici ma collègue Kim Morris, membre du conseil d'administration de Direction jeunesse.

Mesdames, messieurs, honorables membres du Comité, Madame la Présidente, cela nous fait plaisir, au nom de Direction jeunesse, de partager avec vous nos préoccupations philosophiques sur l'éducation.

D'abord, quelques mots sur notre organisme. Nous représentons les quelque 85 000 jeunes de l'Ontario, les jeunes Franco-Ontariens de la province. Notre mission première est de développer l'autonomie et l'initiative du jeune, tant sur le plan physique que socio-économique, d'encourager son épanouissement personnel et de lui assurer une place de choix au sein de la société canadienne. Nous évoluons dans quatre secteurs d'intervention: éducation, travail et emploi, communauté et équité jeunesse, et ce, à l'échelle de la province.

Notre participation au sein du secteur d'éducation ne date pas d'hier. L'éducation a toujours constitué une partie intégrante du quotidien des jeunes. Notre action vise comme but ultime à accroître le niveau de scolarisation et de formation chez les étudiants. Plus spécifiquement, notre action est alimentée par les objectifs

suivants: améliorer la qualité de vie des étudiants, offrir des possibilités de perfectionnement et de formation non institutionnels et développer des services institutionnels de qualité.

Et le tout en français, naturellement.

Notre présentation portera surtout sur deux aspects d'une importance capitale reliés à l'éducation de la fin des années 80, soit le phénomène des décrocheurs et la transition aux études postsecondaires.

Commençons d'abord par une courte leçon de sociologie moderne telle que racontée par un jeune typique d'aujourd'hui:

« Des fois, je sens que la vie, c'est comme une rivière qui m'entraîne dans un courant impossible à remonter. La force du courant, c'est la pression du succès; la rivière, c'est le chemin qu'on doit prendre pour y arriver: en poursuivant mes études et par la suite en me trouvant un bon emploi. Dès que l'on plonge dans la rivière, tout s'accélère et il est presque impossible de m'arrêter pour reprendre mon souffle, sinon, je vais "manquer le bateau". Parfois, je vois d'autres jeunes, qui me ressemblent, mais qui dérivent vers le rivage. Il sera probablement trop tard pour eux de replonger pour essayer de nous rejoindre, le courant nous ayant déjà transportés trop loin. »

Dans cette brève allocution, nous avons voulu souligner la pression constante qui pèse sur le quotidien des jeunes. Ceux-ci évoluent dans une société où les choix s'imposent très rapidement. L'on doit dès les premières années du secondaire décider de l'orientation de sa carrière. L'éducation et le marché du travail deviennent donc intimement reliés.

Il faut mettre toutes les chances de son côté puisque le contexte économique actuel brandit le spectre de la concurrence et du chômage. De plus, le courant individualiste de notre époque influence la perception que se fait le jeune de sa responsabilité face à son avenir. C'est à lui, et à lui seul, de faire la différence.

Pour plusieurs jeunes, la définition des études et du marché du travail est entremêlée de diverses influences de la société. Naviguant entre les désirs de se valoriser sur le plan professionnel dans la société et le besoin d'attention sur le plan personnel, la jeunesse actuelle se retrouve devant une multitude de choix. Travailler aujourd'hui demande donc une éducation de plus en plus poussée, surtout dans des domaines spécialisés.

Mais s'instruire n'est pas tout. Il ne suffit pas d'accumuler un tas de connaissances. Quand on parle de formation, cela doit comprendre l'ensemble de notre personnalité. Lorsque, par exemple, on se présente à une entrevue, l'employeur ne considère pas seulement les notes, les diplômes, les années d'expérience ou le manque d'expérience; il tient compte aussi des aptitudes personnelles des candidats: motivation, dynamisme, initiative, capacité de s'affirmer, de régler des conflits interpersonnels, d'analyser et de résoudre des problèmes.

C'est pourquoi les préoccupations de Direction jeunesse à cet égard rejoignent celles qui ont été exprimées plus tôt au cours de ces audiences par la Fédération des élèves du secondaire franco-ontarien, soit l'importance de valoriser l'implication sociale du jeune, son travail bénévole et sa participation à la vie culturelle et sociale de son école.

L'éducation doit être pertinente. Elle doit permettre une croissance personnelle positive où la prise de conscience de ses émotions, de sa personnalité, de ses talents et de ses faiblesses prend place. Le développement d'aptitudes de vie adéquates, telles que l'autonomie, la communication, la débrouillardise, la prise de décisions, la résolution de conflits, est devenu un besoin vital pour la survie des jeunes à leur sortie de l'école.

Une valorisation des antécédents historiques, de la culture et de la langue des jeunes Franco-Ontariens est également d'une importance vitale. Il faut, afin d'assurer la confiance personnelle chez le jeune, susciter et maintenir une fierté individuelle et collective sur son passé et sa place au sein de l'évolution de la société.

Mme Morris: Transition au postsecondaire: Dans la foulée que vivent les jeunes dans la préparation de leur avenir, la transition du secondaire au postsecondaire est un facteur de taille. Deux éléments influent sur cette transition: l'accessibilité aux études postsecondaires et la disponibilité des programmes en français.

Ce n'est désormais un secret pour personne que l'accessibilité des jeunes Franco-Ontariens et Franco-Ontariennes aux études postsecondaires est fortement diminuée par une série d'éléments: leur statut socio-économique inférieur à la moyenne, l'absence de francophones au sein des instances décisionnelles, le manque de ressources disponibles, des programmes en français limités et éloignés.

Dès le secondaire, l'étudiant perçoit les collèges ou les universités avec une confusion marquée, en grande partie, par un manque

d'information. Des questions se posent: quel domaine d'études choisir? comment choisir entre telle ou telle université? quels sont les débouchés futurs? devrais-je étudier dans un domaine que j'aime ou dans celui qui me procurera un emploi? comment payer mes études? en anglais ou en français? où vais-je demeurer? devrais-je travailler à temps partiel?

Les services d'orientation jouent donc un rôle primordial dans l'attitude et la perception que se fera l'étudiant à l'égard du postsecondaire. Ces services doivent être accessibles et adaptés aux besoins de la jeunesse en quête d'information. L'impact de l'interaction avec l'orienteur marque de façon remarquable la voie que se tracera l'étudiant.

La disponibilité des programmes en français influence en grande partie le choix du domaine d'études de l'étudiant. La majorité des programmes disponibles à l'heure actuelle en Ontario ne s'offre que par l'entremise d'institutions bilingues. Plusieurs études ont d'ailleurs constaté que la langue d'enseignement constituait un facteur de premier ordre dans le choix du programme d'études du jeune Franco-Ontarien. Mais compte tenu des lacunes existantes dans les programmes actuellement disponibles, le choix de carrière de l'étudiant francophone se trouve fortement compromis.

I would like to add something else that is in annex.

En février 1988, Direction jeunesse organisait, en collaboration avec d'autres organismes de jeunes, un forum réunissant des étudiants francophones des collèges et universités. Les attentes des participants face à ces institutions furent clairement exprimées: premièrement, permettre la réalisation du plein potentiel en développant l'autonomie personnelle, c'est-à-dire sociale, culturelle, monétaire, politique; offrir une formation complète et excellente dans tous les secteurs, et surtout dans les domaines d'expertise spécialisée, ainsi qu'une formation concrète reliée au monde du travail; garantir l'accessibilité au monde du travail en répondant aux besoins de la communauté et en offrant une formation pratique qui permettra une meilleure intégration; créer un milieu de vie francophone où le milieu d'études véhiculera la culture franco-ontarienne et permettra une ouverture sur le monde; finalement, donner aux francophones une éducation postsecondaire complète et en français qui, de par son contenu, reflétera la culture et le vécu franco-ontariens et mènera à des postes qui contribueront à l'avancement des Franco-Ontariens.

C'est pourquoi, dans le but de réaliser ces objectifs, Direction jeunesse approuve une fois de plus la position de ses membres en exigeant, premièrement, la création de trois collèges autonomes francophones qui seraient répartis dans les régions du Nord, de l'Est et du Sud; la création d'un conseil des régents francophones chapeautant les trois collèges communautaires francophones; la création d'une université francophone autonome avec multicampus ou avec multi-universités; et la réévaluation de l'aide financière en fonction des coûts supplémentaires engagés par les étudiants francophones.

Mme Boileau: La place des décrocheurs: En Ontario, 40 pour cent des élèves de neuvième année ne finissent pas leur douzième année; 76 pour cent ne finissent pas leur treizième. Seuls 31 pour cent d'entre eux vont au collège ou à l'université, selon le rapport Dryden. Chez les jeunes francophones, seulement dix pour cent poursuivent des études postsecondaires.

Cela veut dire que, pour les Franco-Ontariens, réussir dans un domaine d'avenir demande un double effort: continuer nos études un peu à contre-courant et combattre l'assimilation dans une culture qui, nous le sentons, n'est pas tout à fait la nôtre.

Dans une économie où l'éducation joue un rôle fondamental, le phénomène du décrochage scolaire constitue un problème de premier ordre. Près de la moitié des jeunes ne terminent pas leur secondaire, alors que même les étudiants de l'université ont souvent de la difficulté à se trouver du travail. Si l'on considère l'école comme un service offert aux individus dans la société, le nombre de personnes qui n'en bénéficient pas est indicatif du fait que ce service ne répond pas adéquatement aux besoins d'une majorité d'individus.

Le fait de laisser l'école n'implique nullement par nécessité un virage vers la délinquance ou un échec personnel ou professionnel. La majorité des décrocheurs sont des personnes que le système scolaire n'a pas réussi à atteindre.

Il existe des attitudes répandues selon lesquelles les gens qui n'ont pas décroché un emploi permanent ne sont pas accomplis, manquent de stabilité dans leur vie, n'ont pas réussi à se caser. Il est donc normal pour ceux qui pensent ainsi de considérer comme «décrocheuses» les personnes qui n'arrivent pas à faire comme eux. Dans ce contexte, il semble que le problème soit moins le fait que des élèves décrochent que le fait qu'il n'existe aucune autre structure qui puisse les aider à s'orienter et à faire les choix et les démarches les plus favorables à leur succès.

1420

Afin de mieux cerner l'impact qu'ont sur la vie les règles du système qui l'entoure, nous vous offrons certains éléments du portrait type du jeune décrocheur que vous trouverez en annexe à notre mémoire. Ce portrait fut conçu dans le cadre d'un projet prioritaire de Direction jeunesse qui s'intitule JOB, Jeunesse Opération Boulot, dont le but est de faciliter l'intégration des jeunes décrocheurs au marché du travail et à la prise en charge de leur avenir.

Âgés de seize ans en moyenne, la plupart des décrocheurs ont une histoire familiale peu favorable. En effet, ceux et celles qui sont issus de foyers brisés sont nombreux. L'enfant est généralement durement atteint par la séparation ou le divorce de ses parents. L'un ou l'autre des parents est souvent alcoolique.

L'école a peu de valeur à leurs yeux. C'est un environnement hostile qui les réprime dans leur liberté. Ils manquent souvent de discipline pour entreprendre les travaux et sèchent souvent les cours, à un point tel qu'ils se voient obligés de quitter l'école. Aussi, les décrocheurs manquent généralement de curiosité et de persévérance, un peu en raison de leur désillusionnement face à l'école, un peu en raison de leurs attitudes négatives personnelles et sociales.

Les décrocheurs ont beaucoup de difficulté à résoudre leurs problèmes personnels. L'école n'ayant plus de légitimité à leurs yeux, ils ne savent pas utiliser d'autres moyens de soutien et d'orientation lorsque ceux-ci existent.

La plupart des décrocheurs ont le goût de se débrouiller eux-mêmes. Le besoin frustré d'indépendance et d'autonomie est souvent engendré par la pensée que les autres ne peuvent pas leur venir en aide, comme leurs parents, leurs profs n'ont pu le faire. Ils se méfient des autres pour éviter de se faire mal davantage.

Ils ont également beaucoup de difficulté à reconnaître les figures d'autorité. Des abus passés et la reconnaissance de la non-légitimité de certaines personnes autoritaires les empêchent d'accepter de s'y soumettre, de se conformer. Aussi, l'insécurité et les complexes d'égoïsme constituent des obstacles à cette reconnaissance.

Finalement, les francophones, n'ayant souvent pas su tirer profit de leurs cours en français, ont généralement un problème de langue. Ils ne savent parler ni le français ni l'anglais adéquatement, si bien que la tâche d'apprendre à parler au moins une langue correctement doit être sérieusement envisagée.

Quoi qu'il en soit, la responsabilité est collective en ce sens que toute personne se doit de réfléchir aux séquelles engendrées par un système d'éducation qui laisse pour compte un nombre aussi considérable de personnes.

En guise de conclusion, nous terminons avec une dernière recommandation. Tout changement au sein du système scolaire doit s'effectuer avec les jeunes. Ils sont les premiers à ressentir les impacts des décisions, ils sont les premiers à connaître les forces et les faiblesses des méthodes actuelles. Leur point de vue et leur participation sont primordiaux à toute démarche visant à leur intégration dans le monde adulte. Cela s'appelle un contrat de société.

Mme la Présidente: Madame Boileau, Madame Morris, merci de votre présentation. La première question sera posée par... I think I had better give up. Mr. Johnston.

M. R. F. Johnston: Merci, Madame la Présidente, et merci, Madame Boileau, pour le mémoire.

Premièrement, je voudrais dire que notre parti est en faveur de la création de trois collèges français, et aussi d'une université française, même si ça sera plus difficile à faire, coûtera beaucoup plus cher. Mais il y a déjà une structure qu'on peut utiliser, suivant l'exemple du Collège Algonquin à Ottawa. Là, on attend la réponse du gouvernement; c'est très important. Je regarde les libéraux pour savoir.

Pourriez-vous nous donner plus d'information concernant votre dernière idée, à savoir que tous les changements devraient, si on veut, être effectués avec les jeunes et pour les jeunes? Quand les représentants des écoles secondaires étaient ici, ils ont parlé d'une sorte de collaboration ou de consultation, mais pas d'un pouvoir réel pour les jeunes dans le système. J'aimerais savoir comment vous concevez le rôle des jeunes dans l'éducation, dans l'école et dans le changement du système.

Mme Boileau: D'accord. Je peux peut-être me référer à une expérience que j'ai eue récemment. Je suis allée visiter l'est du Canada, l'Ontario et le Québec, afin de parler justement à des groupes de jeunes partout au Canada pour savoir quelles étaient leurs impressions de l'école. C'était incroyable: pour la première fois, on leur demandait ce qu'ils pensaient de leur école, de leurs profs, des cours d'orientation; ce qu'ils pensaient de l'histoire, de la géographie et du gouvernement. C'était incroyable; c'était comme une bouffée d'air pour eux. Il y avait beaucoup d'information qui sortait.

Il était malheureux qu'on n'ait pas invité les professeurs à assister à ces séances-là. Je me suis dit qu'il aurait certainement été bon que les professeurs y assistent, car ils auraient pu voir que, effectivement, les jeunes avaient des choses à dire et avaient un jugement très élaboré sur les méthodes.

Alors moi, ce que je propose, c'est vraiment un rôle de consultation des jeunes et aussi, jusqu'à un certain point, un rôle décisionnel. C'est-à-dire qu'il existe des conseils scolaires, il existe des conseils de régents, des institutions, des sénats, des bureaux des gouverneurs. Pour moi il est primordial non seulement qu'on ait des étudiants à ces bureaux-là mais que ces étudiants aient le droit de vote. Ils y apporteraient certainement une richesse incroyable, car ils sont aussi les premiers à vivre les impacts des décisions que l'on prend à leur sujet. Alors, c'est beaucoup plus un rôle de consultation et aussi un rôle de porte-parole. Qu'on les écoute et qu'on fasse en sorte que lorsqu'on énonce des politiques, ça aille avec ce que les jeunes ont dit.

M. R. F. Johnston: Selon votre expérience, est-ce qu'il y a des exemples, dans les conseils scolaires, de comités de jeunes, d'étudiants qui donnent leurs avis aux conseils scolaires? Est-ce qu'il y en a des exemples dans les régions francophones? Il y en a des exemples ici, à Toronto, mais...

Mme Boileau: Je sais qu'il existe un genre de comité à Ottawa-Carleton — je ne suis pas certaine si c'est répandu partout dans la province — qui s'appelle PEP, Parents-Élèves-Professeurs; dans un certain sens, ça pourrait couvrir ça. Mais je ne sais pas s'il existe justement un conseil d'étudiants qui est strictement chargé d'informer les conseils scolaires et s'il y a interaction. À mon sens, les conseils scolaires ne font pas participer les jeunes à leur processus.

M. R. F. Johnston: Avez-vous, en tant qu'organisme, Direction jeunesse, des liens officiels avec les associations de conseils scolaires français?

Mme Boileau: Cela dépend ce que vous entendez par «officiel». Disons que nous collaborons avec, par exemple... Souvent la collaboration se fait lorsqu'on met sur pied un projet. Par exemple, nous avons offert des stages en radio étudiante l'an dernier, et nous avons dû coopérer avec le conseil scolaire de Prescott et Russell au début pour pouvoir offrir ces stages-là. Nous avons aussi une très bonne collaboration avec l'Association française des conseils scolaires.

res de l'Ontario et le Conseil d'éducation catholique pour les francophones de l'Ontario.

M. R. F. Johnston: Assistez-vous à leurs réunions annuelles, des choses comme ça?

Mme Boileau: Oui.

M. R. F. Johnston: Merci.

M. Villeneuve: Merci bien, Lucie et Kim, de votre présentation et d'être venues de Bourget. Je ne sais pas exactement d'où Kim vient. D'Ottawa?

Mme Morris: De Sudbury.

1430

M. Villeneuve: De Sudbury, ah bon! Une représentation de l'est et du nord. Cela fait du bien de vous voir ici, toutes les deux.

D'après ce que j'ai pu entendre dans votre présentation, il y a un manque de dialogue avec nos jeunes Ontariens d'expression française. De quelle façon prévoyez-vous qu'on pourrait peut-être, en fin de compte, écouter nos jeunes Ontariens d'expression française? Vous me dites qu'il y a eu une belle présentation, mais les profs n'étaient pas là. En fin de compte, il y a un manque de dialogue, et pourtant il me semble qu'il doit y avoir moyen de commencer ces choses-là.

Pouvez-vous nous suggérer exactement le format que ce comité-ci pourrait peut-être adopter pour améliorer la situation? On parle des décrocheurs. S'il y a un manque de dialogue, il va y avoir des décrocheurs, absolument. Alors, qu'est-ce qui vient en premier? Est-ce qu'on perd nos jeunes gens avant de dialoguer? Veuillez me donner votre opinion là-dessus.

Mme Boileau: Je dirais en premier que oui, effectivement, on perd les jeunes gens avant de dialoguer parce que, quand il n'y a pas de communication, le jeune se sent totalement pris au dépourvu. Face à l'avenir, de grosses questions se posent et lorsqu'elles n'ont pas de réponse, on prend tout de suite le chemin le plus rapide, le plus évident; donc, on décroche parce qu'on ne sent pas qu'on ait la force.

Je n'ai pas de plan précis pour favoriser un genre de dialogue, mais ce que je me dis, c'est que, encore là, les processus de consultation que nous sommes en train de faire en ce moment sont vraiment le «fun». Je ne suis pas certaine si vous invitez beaucoup de jeunes à ces audiences-là ou si beaucoup de jeunes y viennent. Les jeunes viennent, j'imagine, par l'entremise d'associations comme les nôtres, comme Direction jeunesse, comme la Fédération des élèves du secondaire franco-ontarien. Il serait très important d'aller chercher des jeunes du secondaire,

des jeunes qui ne sont pas nécessairement engagés socialement ou politiquement mais qui peuvent très bien parler parce qu'ils vivent dans un milieu d'éducation.

Il y a des forums importants qui s'organisent partout dans la province. Par exemple, Direction jeunesse, en collaboration avec la FESFO et l'Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens, organise chaque année un forum qui s'appelle Orientaction, où on adopte ses positions. Ce forum réunit plein de jeunes de partout dans la province, de tous les collèges et universités. Il serait important que des gens comme vous y assistent. Il y a des assemblées générales; on a eu la nôtre récemment, celle de la FESFO aussi. C'est un autre forum très important.

Je pense qu'une approche qui est importante aussi, c'est que les jeunes ont peut-être peur vis-à-vis des adultes parce que, souvent, on est habitué à avoir des discours de moralisation. On nous dit: «Bon, vous autres, les jeunes, dans notre temps ce n'était pas comme ça. Nous autres, en 1968, on allait sur la Colline parlementaire, puis on brandissait des pancartes. Pourquoi est-ce que vous êtes si apathiques aujourd'hui?» Souvent, on les accuse, on leur lance toutes sortes de questions, et le jeune est tellement pris au dépourvu. Lui, il est au XX^e siècle, dans les années 80; il n'a pas vécu ce courant-là.

Donc, je pense qu'il perçoit avec un peu d'appréhension, peut-être, l'implication des adultes. Mais si les adultes sont là justement avec une approche constructive et qu'ils veulent bien écouter, poser des questions et non pas accuser et essayer de se justifier par rapport aux jeunes, c'est là qu'on peut commencer à avoir un dialogue.

M. Villeneuve: La partie des étudiants est certainement très importante; ils sont les produits du système, et si le système ne les dessert pas bien, eh bien, nous allons nécessairement les perdre.

Changeons de propos un petit peu. Une université entièrement française, c'est un couteau à double tranchant. Nous avons en ce moment des universités bilingues. Si nous établissons une université entièrement francophone, nous allons retirer de nos universités bilingues les jeunes gens qui sont orientés vers le français. Est-ce qu'il serait bon de faire cela? Probablement que nous perdriions le statut bilingue de certaines universités, nous y aurions une orientation plutôt anglophone. De l'autre côté, nous aurions certainement des jeunes gens

qui pourraient bien parler français, du moins je l'espère.

Vous avez mentionné qu'il y a des jeunes gens d'expression française qui ne parlent très bien ni le français ni l'anglais. Je connais le problème, j'en suis conscient. Selon votre opinion, qu'est-ce qui arriverait à nos universités dites bilingues si nous avions une université assez grande qui engloberait probablement la majorité de nos étudiants francophones? Qu'est-ce qui arriverait à notre système bilingue?

Mme Boileau: D'accord. La première petite distinction que j'aimerais apporter, c'est que la façon dont nous concevons une université franco-ontarienne, ce n'est pas, par exemple, qu'elle existe à Sudbury et que ce soit la seule. On la conçoit avec soit un réseau de multi-universités ou multicampus, des campus qui se trouveraient un peu partout dans la province.

Un principe très important chez Direction jeunesse, et c'est ce qui sous-tend vraiment notre position par rapport aux universités franco-ontariennes, c'est que le bilinguisme conduit à l'assimilation. Dans nos universités et collèges actuels, les programmes en français sont minimes par rapport à tout ce qui est offert. Les jeunes commencent souvent par un cours dont les deux ou trois premières années sont offertes en français, mais par la suite les cours ne sont offerts qu'en anglais.

Le milieu de vie est complètement anglophone. Même à Algonquin je ne pouvais pas le croire lorsque j'y suis allée récemment: toutes les affiches sont en anglais. À la Faculté de médecine de l'Université d'Ottawa, les affiches sont en anglais. À L'Equinoxe, le bar étudiant, on a crié lorsqu'on a osé demander à avoir un peu plus de musique en français.

Alors ça, c'est très important. Il y a un milieu de vie en français qui n'est là ni dans les universités bilingues ni dans les collèges en ce moment. Le milieu de vie, les manuels, les cours, les programmes, les services: ce sont des lacunes incroyables qui existent en ce moment. Ce que nous voulons, c'est que les étudiants sortent de ces institutions bilingues pour venir dans une université ou des institutions purement francophones, où ils auront, d'abord, l'excellence de leur programme complètement en français et où ils auront un milieu de vie complètement français auquel il pourront participer et où ils pourront évoluer.

M. Villeneuve: Vous ne voyez rien de négatif là-dedans?

Mme Boileau: Oh, non!

M. Villeneuve: Merci.

Mrs. O'Neill: You are going to have to use the translation for me.

Ms. Boileau: No problem.

Mrs. O'Neill: I certainly commend your presentation. I think what you say is true. I am certainly an anglophone; I have a daughter who does speak French but is of anglophone background. She goes to the University of Ottawa and studies in French there. I have worked with Franco-Ontarians for a long time, but it was not really until I went to a totally French-speaking convention in Quebec that I really began to appreciate that the needs were very different for the students. I think when you say we must go, it is true, and it is not easy to get us there.

I guess I would like to pick up on questions that Mr. Johnston was asking you about official links. Would you expand a little more on that? I do not know your group at all; I am sorry, I do not. It is secondary, it is the world of work and it is post-secondary. Is that right?

Ms. Boileau: It is post-secondary. La FESFO, la Fédération des élèves du secondaire franco-ontarien, deals with the secondary aspect.

Mrs. O'Neill: OK.

Ms. Boileau: We deal with the post-secondary aspect, but also—

Mrs. O'Neill: If you want to speak in French, I will put this on.

Ms. Boileau: No, that is OK.

Mrs. O'Neill: The world of work you also mentioned in your opening remarks.

Ms. Boileau: Yes. We have four main sectors of intervention: the world of work, which includes all the dropouts, the youths who are unemployed and also working youths.

Mrs. O'Neill: Do you make interventions to get government bodies on behalf of these groups?

Ms. Boileau: Yes. Particularly a big thing that we are doing right now is co-ops.

Mrs. O'Neill: OK, that is right?

Ms. Boileau: Direction jeunesse has been the organization which has been implementing these co-ops, and we have been dealing with—

Mrs. O'Neill: At post-secondary?

Ms. Boileau: It does not involve only post-secondary. It is mostly just for high school students, who are mostly the participants.

Mrs. O'Neill: So you said you had some official links. Could you tell me the organizations, then, that do invite you to their annual

meeting or where you, let's say, have a status at the moment?

Ms. Boileau: OK. We have links with all the Franco-Ontarian organizations that do exist.

Mrs. O'Neill: So you were up at Mont Gabriel with the French trustees?

Ms. Boileau: No, personally I was not, but we had somebody over there.

Mrs. O'Neill: You did?

Ms. Boileau: Yes.

Mrs. O'Neill: That is a great thing.

Ms. Boileau: Oh, you were there?

Mrs. O'Neill: Yes.

Ms. Boileau: But a big organization that we are part of is le Conseil des présidents des organismes en éducation—

Mrs. O'Neill: OK, yes, I know that one.

Ms. Boileau:—which meets every month, and we are attending things such as le Conseil de l'éducation franco-ontarienne organized. We were there on the forum they organized on post-secondary—

Mrs. O'Neill: That is a very strong commitment, and I commend you for it. I hope you have some men involved, too; I hope it is not all just—
1440

Ms. Boileau: Actually, it is mostly men, I must admit.

Mrs. O'Neill: But you are the president this year.

Ms. Boileau: Yes, two years in a row.

Mrs. O'Neill: Please keep in touch with us. Certainly if we can be of any help, I would like to continue the contact.

Ms. Boileau: So would we. Thanks a lot.

Mme la Présidente: Merci d'avoir participé aux discussions du Comité aujourd'hui.

I would also like to add a personal note of thanks, since I was always very curious as to what the francophone equivalent of "Ms." was. Now I know it is "madelle," so thank you very much for that as well. We appreciate your comments today.

The next groups to appear before us are the Ontario Alliance of Christian School Societies, the Ontario Christian School Teachers' Association and the Ontario Christian School Administrators' Association. Would you come forward, please? I gather you are making a joint presentation under the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools.

Mr. Guldemon: Yes, we are.

Madam Chairman: If you would like to introduce yourself for the purposes of electronic Hansard, you may begin when you are ready.

ONTARIO ALLIANCE OF CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

Mr. Guldemon: I am Adrian Guldemon, the executive director of the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools. On my left is Hank Hultink, executive director of the Ontario Christian School Teachers' Association. Our names, by the way, are in the letter under the brief. On my right is Jack Zondag, the chairman of the board of directors of the Ontario Christian School Administrators' Association.

Madam Chairman: I notice that you have a very comprehensive brief before us, some 24 pages. In order to allow time for questions at the end, you might consider whether you would like to précis part of it, as I am sure we do have a number of questions for you.

Mr. Guldemon: Yes, indeed, that was our intent. After we considered what we wanted to say, it did occur to us that it was somewhat voluminous. That is also why we prepared this short summary page for you, which I will come to at the end. I understand you would like a presentation of about 20 minutes.

Madam Chairman: That would be ideal. That should give us plenty of time to have you field some of our questions.

Mr. Guldemon: OK, we appreciate that.

I would like to walk the members of the committee through sections of the brief as a sort of background to the proposals that we have for your attention. If you can turn for a moment to page 1—that is the page right after the index—we have explained something about the nature of the alliance and the associated organizations.

We realize that the makeup of the independent school sector might be somewhat confusing to members of the Legislature, so we have provided a background on the history of the organization, the number of schools in it—you can see the number of students on the first page there—the nature of the teachers' and administrators' organizations, as well as the functions of the organization, which we describe for you on page 2, item 9. I would like to draw your attention to that for a moment, because it is somewhat unusual among the independent school organizations.

We have been in existence since 1952, and we have gradually developed a fairly full range of services for the member schools. They contain a fair variety of the kinds of things that support

services provide, including school evaluations, which we do on a regular basis. We provide our own curriculum materials for the schools, we run professional development programs and we provide various financial and other consultation services for the boards that operate the schools.

In conjunction with the administrators and teachers, we also provide the boards with suggested salary and contract guidelines for each school year. Those services have the effect of providing a fairly uniform educational environment and policy structure for the schools associated with the alliance. We also maintain cordial relations with the personnel in the Ministry of Education dealing with the various ministry policies that affect us.

We are pleased to have the opportunity to address you on various issues and we certainly hope it will give you an idea of the scope of the independent school sector.

If you would turn with me to page 4 of the brief, we thought we would take a somewhat global approach to the situation of the present condition of education. These things have, of course, been said by the various commissions and reports the government has published recently. We do pay attention to those reports, because education in the public sector and public perceptions about education affect us as well, as you can imagine.

We have generally the opinion that the current condition of the educational system is not as good as it should be. We feel, as we explain in this part, that part of it has to do with the scope of the educational task the government has given the schools. We feel, along with points made by previous commissions and Mr. Radwanski in his latest study, government's policy decision-making process would be easier if the schools were given a more limited task.

We submit that the school should basically be an educational institution and we certainly underscore the comments in the commissions to that effect. We realize that may not be as simple for a public system as it is for a private one, but we certainly feel that is one of the directions the government ought to consider seriously.

We have summarized a number of our comments about the recent commissions, including the Radwanski study, in the pages between 6 and 13. Basically, we call attention to a number of things which we can probably summarize more briefly by skipping a few pages and taking a look at page 12 of the brief.

One of the policy directions we would like to encourage is a somewhat more limited approach

to the whole educational enterprise, so that as a matter of fact the responsibility for education falls on the schools themselves and not necessarily on the government. That is also why we have always suggested that a limited involvement in education from the government's point of view would leave the schools free to respond to the various social conditions in which they find themselves. That is all outlined in the next section as well.

1450

If you would turn to page 20, which is sort of a summary of our perspective, I would like to take you through a number of the points before we take a look at the recommendations we would like you to consider.

The first point in the summary is that we agree that education is an essential social service and see no problem with a major role for the government. However, we will respectfully submit that it should not be an exclusive or an exhaustive function.

We also think there is ample evidence on the second point, that the uncertain nature of economic realities and the indirect relationship between schools and the economy seem to indicate that government should adopt a multifaceted policy incorporating public and private initiatives. It is our understanding that this works in other public sectors such as health care and community services, as well as the technology and business sector, and we do not see why this could not work in education as well.

To summarize part of the sections we have just passed, on the whole we believe there is a fairly loose relationship between the quantity of schooling and the resulting educational quality. That, of course, is partly because of the many factors that impinge on the effectiveness of the school which are beyond the control of the school. Consequently, we recommend that the sort of centralized model, which is basically a factory model, of the school be changed to a multi-institutional ecology of learning centres, which we feel would be a much more flexible solution to the fast-changing state of society.

We also feel that we have new factors in society which were probably not there a number of decades ago when the school system was given its current format. We feel that the reality of multiculturalism and pluralism in both ideologies and lifestyles makes it inappropriate for the government to continue to insist on one socialization role for all the schools. We recommend the encouragement of a diversity both within the system and outside the system.

It is our belief, furthermore, that a number of the current ills in the system which have been analysed and pinpointed by the various studies are also tied to the institutional paradigm in Ontario education, which is basically one centralized system which is expected to be all things to all people. It is our belief that unless the underlying principle of universality and institutional monopoly is examined and changed, very little will change in Ontario education, despite the fairly frequent array of reports and commissions.

If you summarize that, on page 21, point 7, it is our hope that the educational innovations necessary for what we consider to be a highly specialized information age will be encouraged to develop from various social sectors, not just the public school system but also businesses, the health sector and, of course, the private sector in education. We feel that this is in keeping with the dynamic, decentralized and unpredictable nature of the age. We are hoping that the government will adopt a multifaceted approach involving a broad view of public education, especially involving horizontal linkages across many areas and not limited to youth entirely.

With that as a background that you can read for yourselves should you so wish, I would like to take a look at the recommendations. As a general background, we certainly would pick point 1.1, which we feel is the most relevant, which is to ask the government to encourage institutional diversity within existing school boards and through alternative boards.

We would like to encourage the development of small-scale, totally integrating educational units to deal with specific economic training needs, and we would, hopefully, suggest that the tendency to incorporate all new trends into the existing system be checked somewhat. We would encourage a horizontal linkage between schools and various other social institutions to give the students greater experience inputs and also to give other social sector services a direct influence in the schools. We would encourage the government to provide the resources for those willing to undertake new educational initiatives and experiments.

If you would turn for a minute to the alternative page, the separate page, before we get to the recommendations that we would like to propose to you specifically relating to the independent school sector, I have already mentioned point 1. One of things we would like to encourage is point 2, that the exercise of redefining the aims of education on a fairly

regular basis is perhaps not the wisest course of action for the government and that perhaps this matter should be left to the schools themselves. It has been our experience that if you change the aims of education regularly, you tend to confuse the public and confuse the teaching profession as well.

We would also like to call your attention to the third point, that a centrally controlled education, largely the responsibility of a central system, is perhaps not appropriate for a multicultural society in view of the fact that there is no really common vision of humanity in society at this point which the schools could be serving. Consequently, we recommend, in point 5 actually, that the government ensure that the schools produce a functionally literate citizenry but should leave the interpretation and implementation of a standard to professional educators.

The government should provide equal opportunity and resources to all qualified schools, and educators should be trusted to select the curriculum orientations and pedagogical alternatives most suitable for their particular schools.

With that, and also somewhat in response to the questions raised in the Radwanski study, it is our conviction, in point 6, that the schools should be responsible for education and not job training or social class selection. We would also like to call to your attention something which we find is somewhat missing in the recent reports—that is point 7—that true education, which is something we are all ultimately interested in pursuing and supporting, involves disciplining the intellect and training the passions in the pursuit of a vision of truth and goodness. This can be accomplished in a rigorous general education for all students if there is a shared commitment to a specific version of the virtuous life. This is as important for the public welfare as more high-technology skill training, which seems to be one of the recommendations in the Radwanski report.

If you turn to number 8, over the page, you will see it is our view that this can best be encouraged if the government provides the support services necessary to ensure that all schools are effective schools and that in addition to the current controls, the professional responsibility of choosing also be given to students.

Our own view of the situation with respect to how long students should be staying in the general education program is that, generally speaking, we feel that grade 10 is a good exit for students who can no longer benefit from the academic studies. We would also like to suggest that the committee consider investigating the

question of the efficiency of education in the lower grades, and we would also like to suggest that the high schools and the universities themselves set standards for the promotion of education.

1500

Finally, we would request that the ministry provide additional research grants to all schools and professionals to develop alternative ways of achieving specific public purposes—in other words, teaching about democratic values and citizenship or other purposes—and that further research grants be given to developing additional types of standardized testing and selective program reviews for each type of school that exists in the province. We feel that would be in keeping with the diversified interpretation of education which we feel is appropriate for this modern age.

If you turn back to the brief, on page 22, there are a number of suggestions in point 2 which we feel deal specifically with the independent school sector. On the first one, we have suggested that we would like to encourage the government to set up a better liaison with the independent schools, the entire independent school section, through the establishment of a council of independent schools.

On the second point, we would like to encourage the ministry to develop and upgrade a special independent school section within the supervisory services unit of the ministry. This would give access to all the main school organizations.

On our third recommendation: Currently, as you know, the independent schools provide the provincial diploma. There is some discussion in the ministry at the moment about whether the inspection services designed to justify the issuing of the diploma are adequate. We would suggest that a different mechanism be put in place: namely, an accreditation agency with both public and private professional educators on it. We feel there are benefits to that.

We would also like to call your attention, in point 4, on page 23, to a situation which we feel is less than desirable at this point. That is the difficulty we are currently experiencing receiving certain support services, not from the Ministry of Education but from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Community and Social Services for physically handicapped children. We feel that some initiative from the government in order to ensure that all handicapped children in the province receive those services would be very beneficial as well. We do

not feel that certain handicaps should be serviced less just because the parents choose a private school education.

Point 5: We have recommended that the committee reconsider some of the recommendations in the Shapiro commission report, and we list the recommendations there which we feel could be implemented without great cost to the Treasury.

We also would like to call your attention to a current situation which we feel is less than desirable and that is the French grant which comes from the federal government. It has currently not been received in our schools, nor in any other school, because I guess the Ontario government and the federal government are discussing the amounts. In the meantime, while this is not a significant grant for the provincial school boards, the money for our school boards has been held up as well, and we do have significant French programs.

Finally, we would also like to suggest that the funding for foster children be made available to parents who choose to send those children to private schools.

I think that gives you an idea of what is on our mind. Thank you for the opportunity to address you.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. You were true to your word; I think you made it in exactly 20 minutes, which allows us sufficient time for questions. I have Mr. Mahoney and Mrs. O'Neill on the list to date. Just before we go to them, I want to use my prerogative as chair to ask a question.

I notice you have said we have a monolithic education system which is expected to be all things to all people. You might not get a lot of disagreement with that or you might. Then you went on to say, in your specific recommendations, that we should, "Discourage the perennial tendency to incorporate all new trends and developments into the existing system."

Now, we have heard a lot from various presenters about the crowded curriculum, but we have also heard the viewpoint that the school is the last avenue of help and that a lot of these children will never get the information from any other source, that if you are talking about education on acquired immune deficiency syndrome or the environment or sex education or what have you, there are a number of homes and a number of communities where the children will not have the information unless the school provides it.

I gather from your statement that you think the crowded curriculum should be reduced and that a lot of these frill curriculum subjects should be dropped. Do you agree with that statement; and if so, what would you drop?

Mr. Guldemand: I guess the matter of whether some of those items are frills depends to some extent on precisely which school you are dealing with. We are not saying that some schools in some locations may not find it possible to not deal with them if they have substantial numbers of students in that predicament. The kind of thing we particularly find somewhat disconcerting is that once a particular social problem is identified, either in the media or by the educators, the matter is turned into a policy and the next thing we know the ministry then issues us a circular saying we have to teach this particular topic X number of hours. Then, of course, that imposes a problem for our curriculum. Yes, we are definitely in favour of a reduced curriculum, and I am sure we are not the only educators who favour that.

I think one of the emphases we have is that a number of those kinds of policies are to be made at a local level by the local school board, which can respond to a particular—even within a large school board, there are various areas that have different constituencies, and we would like to have that sort of freedom develop, rather than getting all these directives from the government that on many occasions are sort of pointless for our schools and for a number of public schools.

Madam Chairman: Basically, you would like more autonomy for the local school boards to make that decision?

Mr. Guldemand: Yes, and then they can make the decision whether or not they need to deal with that issue.

Mr. Mahoney: I was going to ask a question on the same point. By way of a supplementary to the chair's question, how would you feel about the concept of sort of creating a blank section of the curriculum that was to deal specifically with changing trends in society as they occur? I refer you back. As I said to an earlier delegation last week, I can recall the types of issues when I went to school. We talked about tuberculosis and polio as diseases we were struggling with at that time. I guess I just dated myself.

Mr. Keyes: I should think so.

Mr. Mahoney: I was at the tail end of that, of course. You were probably at the beginning.

In an attempt to reduce the curriculum load, do we really want to go towards stopping this kind of

information flow, which in my view should be related to family, lifestyle and all those kinds of things?

1510

Mr. Guldemand: From the point of view of our schools, since we have a fairly consistent perspective on a number of these issues, it is easy for us to integrate them into the regular program without requiring blocks of time.

If you were looking at it as a larger policy issue, I think some sort of maximum on the curriculum for that would be an ideal situation, whether you want to call that sort of a blank block on the calendar or simply—the ministry likes talking in terms of hours. You could easily suggest a policy where a half-hour of the high school timetable would be devoted to X issue, if it is not being dealt with in a course someplace and provided that we would not be told to put the half-hour in.

I will give you an example of the kind of problem we have with French instruction, for example. Our schools teach French, and a few years' back, when the ministry decided that this was a new priority and everybody was told to put X hours of French into the curriculum, we went back and said we could do that in half the time. I do not know whether the figure was 800 hours—

Mr. Hultink: It was 600 hours.

Mr. Guldemand: Six hundred hours. We went back and said: "This really puts us in a pinch because we already have a number of extra subjects on the entire curriculum and we would like to have less time. We will guarantee you that the fluency at the end of grade 8 will be better than what it would be otherwise." The answer came back, "No, we do not deal with proficiency; we deal with time slots."

The question of whether the students could speak French was irrelevant. We had to show that there were 600 hours of French somewhere in the curriculum. That is the kind of thing we mean about blanket policies that do not make educational sense.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Mahoney, I think Mr. Cooke has a supplementary on that specific point. Are you going to be pursuing this? You can come back to your second question.

Mr. Mahoney: I have a question on item 9, but if he wants to jump in on this, he may.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: You were flowing from Madam Chairman's question. What I am trying to get a handle on is, if the ministry sets certain expectations—take AIDS education, for example—and indicates that it wants education

available in the public school system, and obviously in your school sector as well, if the public or public separate school boards have some objections and discuss them at open public school board meetings, at least there is some public accountability. If we just leave it up to you, as you indicated should be done, where is the accountability?

Obviously, your students are not in a position to say: "We should have that in our schools." Where is the accountability to the students, especially if some of the inspections, as you are recommending, are almost privatized?

Mr. Hultink: In large part, especially at the elementary level, what we as private schools do is of very little concern to the government, because the elementary schools are not inspected. What we do between kindergarten and grade 8 is of no recorded concern to the Ministry of Education. When we get into the secondary panel, grades 9 through 12, or the Ontario academic course, then there is some concern because of the accreditation program. Our accountability, to answer your question, is primarily to the support group that maintains those schools.

I dare say parental involvement at the level of support for committees, parental involvement at the membership and related meetings is there. Because these people pay X dollars, and that sometimes is in excess of \$5,000 per year out of their pockets, I can assure you accountability is there. We are very accountable to our clients, our parent group. The point is that it is not likely we would get away with, if that is the expression used, not keeping our parents posted on developments in French, AIDS education or anything else, for that matter.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I guess I especially have difficulty in understanding your first comment, that basically from kindergarten to grade 8 you can pretty well do anything you want to do. I did not realize there was not more involvement from the Ministry of Education.

Mr. Hultink: There is none, sir. I register my school, Calvin Christian School in Hamilton which has approximately 340 pupils, with the ministry on an annual basis, and that means completing an intention to operate a private school. After that, I see no one and hear from no one, unless one of my teachers wishes to become permanently certified through the Ontario system.

That is it. I have a responsibility to the health department, the fire department and for the welfare of the students, but I have no responsibility

to the Ministry of Education. I could teach colouring all day long or tree planting in grade 8. Technically, you do not even check my attendance, whether my students are there or not, for 200 school days a year. It makes no difference to the ministry. I choose to complete a register of attendance, but you do not check it.

Mr. Jackson: Do they require it?

Mr. Hultink: No. I choose to do it because it is a professional thing to do.

Interjections.

Mr. Hultink: Sure.

Mr. Guldemon: Could I pick up on that point. In addition to this, I think the same can be said to some extent of the public school system as well. The ministry has no official inspection services there either, so this is sort of a general—

Mr. D. S. Cooke: There is accountability through the school boards. There is a public accountability. There is a societal accountability. The fact that a group of parents, a group of teachers can make a decision that something should not be taught because it should be taught by some other social service or someplace else is just not my philosophy. I use again the example of AIDS education. I think there has to be public accountability and that does not happen in the system you are talking about.

Mr. Guldemon: As to the system, I think we are suggesting that accountability in fact is the school board's. We are suggesting that is the school board in our case, which it is as a matter of fact; but we are also suggesting that it should be the school board in the public school case, since it is responsible for setting up that program.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: At the end, after the kids go through your system, the product could be and probably is quite different from somebody who goes through one of the two public school systems, but as a taxpayer and as a person living in this province, I have to get along in society with the product you create. If you do not take on some of the societal issues because you do not want to take them on, whether it is sex education, AIDS education or whatever the issue is that you seem to object to, there are implications for the rest of the province, but there is not the accountability to the rest of the province.

Mr. Hultink: If I may, I do not think it is a matter of objecting, for example, to the teaching of information on AIDS.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I just used that example because it seems to have come up a lot in the last week. I am sure you were talking about social

issues the ministry expects you to respond to along with the public system.

Mr. Hultink: Perhaps, Mr. Cooke, that is the reason we and others in the past week, and you and your colleagues, are taking a look at this whole report. I think we are all going to have to agree that sooner or later the public school, as we know it, cannot be a surrogate father or mother and take care of any and all needs and ills in society. We are just going to run out of time.

Traditionally, your parents and my parents spent 24 hours a day with us when we were young. We now get the children from nine o'clock to three o'clock and there is no way we can take the place of the parents. What I am saying is that somewhere along the line we have to return some of the responsibility that pressure groups put on the school system to the parents, whether or not it is a single-parent setting. I appreciate the complexity in the report and the time limit, that there are two parents both working to try to get a certain standard of living, but we cannot take it all on.

If something else comes down the pipe half a year from now, once we get AIDS education straightened out there will be something else society at large will want the school to undertake, to the point where the original recommendations the report talks about, getting back to the three hours, we will not even have time for it. We will be too busy socializing, being a surrogate father or a surrogate mother. In that sense, a limited curriculum is indeed what we are looking for. We have to give some of it back.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I do not think it has been taken away to the extent you do. I find it difficult that in one part of your brief you talk about the public education system being almost like a factory and just producing a product, and then you talk about your wanting to get back to the basics. It sounds to me as though the system you would create is more like a factory, is more like, "This is what we are here to teach you and this is what you are going to come out like at the end, and that is it." It sounds to me more like a factory than the public education system.

1520

Mr. Hultink: I cannot argue how you interpret the brief. I can suggest to you, sir, that the private school section we represent, which the ministry calls private schools, that independent section called the Christian schools, works very much in conjunction with the parents, and there is no way it would be allowed to be a factory school.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Mahoney has been very patient.

Mr. Mahoney: I was going to go on to another item. I might just add, though, that many of us, as parents, would hope that the school system would be able to get the facts out properly to our young people on whatever the issue happened to be, because we certainly do not necessarily get the proper information ourselves. The issue of AIDS is the one that is easiest to deal with. I would like to have some confidence in feeling that my kids are getting the proper information, not necessarily from what they read in the paper or perhaps see on TV. That is why I think that in some form in any education system there has to be a part of the curriculum that allows for discussions of current trends that are vitally important to educating for life.

My other question was on item 9. The streaming issue is one that is obviously on a lot of people's minds these days. This is really another form of streaming, saying that when you are 16, "That is it; we have decided you are failing Shakespeare so we are going to put you into auto mechanics," or whatever. I would be interested in your response and comments. Maybe you can expand on the timing of an issue like that. I think we have had some discussion of this. The vocational aspects of education at a certain time and point in a student's life should, in my view, be a little more important. We do not want a bunch of philosophers graduating from grade 12 or grade 13, sitting around, able to have wonderful conversations, but not able to do anything.

I can sympathize with your desire to stream individuals towards certain career goals, but at the same time I would have concerns about it being as rigid as: "OK, it is age 16. Your general education is over with. Now we are going to put you into this." Am I interpreting it correctly?

Mr. Guldemand: Not quite. We think more in terms of making a significant option available, rather than saying a stream ends at some point. In other words, we try to envision the current streaming model to continue, so a student in the general program would certainly continue until graduation in grade 12.

One of the things we have found is that a number of vocational options in the grades 10, 11 and 12 area are not really significant. They are sort of halfway houses. They are sort of makeshift and a person cannot quite make up his mind whether he is really training for a vocation, whether he really wants to stick in high school. If a person wants to stay in a school, that is

perfectly fine. There will not be any forced ending or choice. We are simply saying that a very clearly vocational choice should be available at that point. In our experience, a number of students really do not benefit from staying in the general program beyond that stage.

Mr. Mahoney: Being the father of three teenage boys, I would be a little concerned if a statement was put out that put hard and fast lines on it, like grade 10 and 16 years old. There might be a tendency for some young people to see that as a turning point or for it to become their goal. "I have to get to that level," and it becomes almost a quasi-graduation in their minds. That would concern me, and that appears to be a fairly rigid concept in your presentation.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Mahoney. We just have approximately eight or nine minutes left.

Mr. Villeneuve: I will be as brief as possible.

There is a lot of concern, as expressed by my friends from the NDP, regarding monitoring and autonomy. Can you tell us what percentage of your students would go on to post-secondary education and what happens to them historically?

Interjection: What feedback we get?

Mr. Villeneuve: Yes.

Mr. Guldemand: There is a section in the brief about the dropout problem in our schools. We do not have a dropout problem. In fact, we have a five per cent turnover in the high schools, or people who select to go to the public high school for program reasons; and 52 per cent of our students go on to post-secondary education and graduate from colleges or universities and come back to the community in various professions. I think the statistic on community college entrance is 27 per cent, so the remainder would go immediately into jobs at that point. They have had a fairly rigorous general education up to that point. Our schools do not have vocational wings.

Mr. Villeneuve: I happen to be familiar with the Timothy Christian School in the riding I represent and I like a lot of the things I see there. You are, quite obviously, very autonomous from kindergarten to grade 8 and you have secondary education in the city of Ottawa which many of the students from Timothy go to. From what you have just said, you have a higher percentage of your students going on to post-secondary and graduating, so I think monitoring at that stage of the game is an indication and that is as good an indicator as any.

Autonomy is very important to your school system. I would like to go back to page 23,

recommendation 5, Dr. Shapiro's 1985 report, recommendations 17, 18, 19 and 20, limited support recommended by Dr. Shapiro. Regarding autonomy, are you prepared to give up some of your autonomy for some of what is in number 5? Second, what are your priorities: capital grants, transportation or learning materials?

Mr. Guldemand: To take the last question first, I would think most of the schools would go for the transportation as priority number one, since the perception is that is the least difficult for the authorities to handle.

Mr. Villeneuve: Integrating with an existing system.

Mr. Guldemand: That is right. That is easy to do, and in some schools it is a significant budget item they would rather not have. They would rather spend the money on the programs.

Learning materials would be next, especially lab, some of the technical equipment, and then capital grants would be last. It is not a major item. We do not have too many schools building at this point, so that would be fairly minor.

On the first question, the matter of what exchanges we might want to make, on that score I think we have always suggested that we will be open to discussing suggestions from the government.

Some of the inspection procedures, for example, we feel could be mutually improved to give some accountability to the ministry in areas where they currently do not exist, as Mr. Hultink mentioned. We feel that some of the program changes could be made if, in return, significant grants were available for us to improve some of the programs in areas we would like to have.

Mr. Villeneuve: You obviously react quite quickly to parental requests, and your monitors are really the people who pay the shot and you really pay for your autonomy because you are paying the full shot as it now is. How do you feel your people would accept some of the loss of this autonomy? Do you feel that would be palatable to them? How would that be accepted?

Mr. Guldemand: It depends a bit on the area. We have taken surveys among our own supporters. For example, the question of insisting that all teachers have Ontario teaching certificates is not considered to be a major problem. Right now about 72 per cent of our teachers have OTCs. They are already certified from some jurisdiction. If the government were to insist that they all would be, that would not be a major question. On some of the program areas, there would be considerable hesitation, and some of those we

probably would not change; but in terms of some administrative and sort of logistical changes, we would certainly be happy to discuss them.

1530

Mr. Villeneuve: It will be most interesting to see, when Mr. Shapiro comes before this committee and when he possibly has the opportunity of recommending that some of his own report be initiated, what happens in due course. Thank you very much.

Mrs. O'Neill: I would like to ask two specific questions, if I may. I go to folio 22. You have as one of the suggestions for the province, "encourage development of small-scale, totally integrated educational units to deal with specific economic training needs." Can you tell us a little more about what that means?

Mr. Guldemand: Largely, we anticipate that the economic developments will require very specialized training in high-tech fields. We are suggesting that rather than farm the program for that out over many schools, with a course here and a course there, which students may or may not take, it be concentrated in special schools that students could attend to start preparing for specific programs at the community colleges and universities—in other words, concentrated programs.

Mrs. O'Neill: These schools you are talking about would be in the public system?

Mr. Guldemand: Yes.

Mrs. O'Neill: The next question has to do with your very last statement, 10b of the General Proposals—Supplement to OACSS Brief, referring to "additional types of standardized testing services."

First of all, do you have both general and advanced level programming in your school? With regard to the types of standardized testing, have the private schools or the Christian schools been involved in the development of new testing and evaluation that is taking place? Have you been part of those new programs?

Mr. Guldemand: I do not think so.

Mrs. O'Neill: What is your concept then? What is your ideal here?

Mr. Guldemand: Partly to pick up on the question of accountability, which Mr. Cooke raised, we have always participated in certain standard tests which all students in public schools take as well, but we feel that the format and the timing of them is fairly limited. Basically, we would like a larger variety of them, more frequently administered and free, of course.

Maybe the benchmarks program you were referring to is one of these program review matters that the ministry has developed, in which case we would certainly like to participate.

Mrs. O'Neill: That is what they are. Each of the subject areas is being tested on a cyclical basis.

Mr. Guldemand: Two of our high schools, in fact, are participating in the geography review.

Mrs. O'Neill: Those are the ones I was referring to.

Mr. Guldemand: Yes.

Mrs. O'Neill: You are suggesting that you would want even more of those?

Mr. Guldemand: Yes, that seems to us to be a better way of doing it than to impose a standardized core program.

Mr. Jackson: You are also inviting comparison between systems. There is nothing wrong with that, but that is a side benefit.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Fleet, you have a question.

Mr. Fleet: If I can squeeze in a few quick ones, I will. On page 12 of the brief, you indicate there that you desire that the government not "set predetermined academic standards for universities." There has been some discussion earlier. I am not clear. Do you envisage some kind of a standard test at age 16 or at some point, or are you saying you do not want standard tests across the province at any stage?

Mr. Guldemand: Yes, the latter. We are perfectly happy with a university entrance exam, for example, in subjects, but we think it has to be administered by the universities for those students who wish to enter that university.

Mr. Fleet: There would be no standard by which a parent would then be able to compare academic skills coming out of high school? Is that right?

Mr. Guldemand: We think that concept is fairly hazardous.

Mr. Fleet: The other point that, frankly, I was somewhat astounded at, and I did not want to let it pass without giving some, albeit perhaps a brief opportunity to respond, is on page 10. To quote, it says that you "wish to question whether there is any evidence to justify the view of the school as the guardian of public morality." Then a couple of sentences later, it says, "In general, it seems to be the case that more schooling simply produces a better informed criminal."

Maybe that does not mean what it seems to mean, but I was rather astounded by that. Can you tell me what that means?

Mr. Guldemon: Yes, I can see that you might call that to our attention.

I think the general assumption that just more information would turn out a better person is what we are calling attention to. One of the things we would like to encourage as well is a clearer view of the moral dimensions of the curriculum in the public school system. In other words—and I guess we do this partly as citizens as well—the view that certain values and certain virtues need not be taught or that you become a better person simply through quantity of knowledge is the kind of thing we were commenting on there. A good person or a virtuous person is something we think the schools ought to pay attention to as well, not just an informed one. In other words, morality is not a function of the level of information.

Mr. Fleet: I would say that is somewhat different from what the brief says, as I read it.

Mr. Guldemon: I apologize for that.

Madam Chairman: I would like to thank you for coming before our committee today and adding your valuable comments.

Mr. Guldemon: Thank you for the opportunity.

Madam Chairman: Our next presenters will be the Ontario Jewish Association for Equity in Education. Would you like to come forward and seat yourselves? Welcome, gentlemen. Perhaps you could start off by introducing yourselves for the purposes of electronic Hansard.

Mr. Zaionz: My name is Charles Zaionz. I am the chairman of the Ontario region of the Canadian Jewish Congress.

Mr. Farber: My name is Bernie Farber. I am the director of the Ontario Jewish Association for Equity in Education.

Madam Chairman: We are hoping your presentation will be brief enough that it will allow for questions at the end. Please feel free to commence whenever you are ready.

ONTARIO JEWISH ASSOCIATION FOR EQUITY IN EDUCATION

Mr. Zaionz: In the interest of time, I will not read the first two pages of our brief, which really review what the Canadian Jewish Congress is and what the committee, which is a standing committee of the Canadian Jewish Congress, is. I am sure most members of the committee are familiar with the work of the Canadian Jewish Congress. I would like to begin on page 3.

Though Ontario Jews have always been strong supporters of public education and the majority of Jewish children are educated within the public

school system, most Jews do believe in parental right of choice in selecting the educational system in which their children should be enrolled.

Public education has at times been flawed by an insensitivity to the concerns of minority communities. Ontario's Education Act mandates religious instruction and exercises, which in some cases have taken the form of Christian indoctrination. Furthermore, though students have the right not to participate, the very process of exemption singles out some students from others and is, in effect, discriminatory.

Some Ontario public high schools insist on teaching works with problematic racial stereotypes, such as *The Merchant of Venice* or *Huckleberry Finn*, to children as young as 13 years of age, with teachers who have had no race relations training, despite years of protest by the Canadian Jewish Congress that such works be taught more age-appropriately. The result is that children of minority communities have been negatively affected, and these literary classics unintentionally have at times promoted prejudice rather than served as vehicles for understanding.

The Ontario public school system, for the most part, does meet the needs of a province actively promoting a multicultural society. None the less, there are a significant number of Jewish parents who want their children to learn within a Jewish atmosphere, which is, at one and the same time, free of any insensitivity and complementary to and supportive of their Canadian identity. It is these parents who opt to send their children to independent Jewish day schools. In the view of the Canadian Jewish Congress, these schools measurably add to the multicultural framework of our province and are deserving of government financial support.

1540

Among the 500 independent schools in Ontario, there are 20 Jewish day schools, including elementary and secondary schools. The Canadian Jewish Congress feels that a gross unfairness has been perpetuated against those parents who have opted out of the public system and chosen for their children an independent school that fits with their religious and/or philosophical beliefs. The congress consistently has supported the extension of funding to Roman Catholic secondary schools beyond grade 10 as fully consonant with our society's concept of pluralism and multiculturalism.

The Supreme Court of Canada upheld the constitutionality of extended funding to Roman Catholic high schools, though it noted that this

action may be viewed as a form of discrimination, albeit permissible under our Constitution. This judgement has in no way removed the responsibility of provincial politicians from doing what is right. We believe it is morally offensive not to fund other legitimate religious groups with viable school systems in Ontario.

Independent schools predate public schools. In reality, the entire development of education in our country grew out of the independent school system. Today independent schools reflect a diversity of approaches in education that parents obviously want for their children. Ontario remains the only jurisdiction that refuses to recognize in some tangible, financial way the benefits and necessity of independent education in a pluralistic society.

The opponents of government funding to independent schools have raised a number of bogymen. One of the most common is the myth that funding independent schools would splinter and erode the public school system. As supporters of the public system, the Canadian Jewish Congress has looked very closely at this concern and we have found it to be without merit.

The experience of five provinces—Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia—which fund independent schools shows there has been no erosion of the public system, even though in Quebec, for example, the government covers 80 per cent of the operating costs of independent schools. As Peter Dyck, an executive director with Saskatchewan's Department of Education told Ontario's public hearings into the issue, "Funding of independent schools in Saskatchewan has been successful since its institution in 1968 and has not eroded the public school system in any way."

Erosion of the public school system has not occurred in Saskatchewan, other provinces or the 65 countries around the world which fund independent schools. Surely if other provinces in some form or another can fund their independent schools without endangering their public system, Ontario can do likewise. There are four provinces, other than Ontario, which do not directly fund independent schools, but these do offer various forms of subsidization, such as access to free textbooks and bus transportation. Ontario, which in many ways is in the forefront of promoting a pluralistic and multicultural Canada, is the only province offering no assistance whatsoever to its independent schools.

It is argued that independent school aid would create government-sanctioned, elitist institutions only open to the students from well-off families,

fragmenting society along class lines. But it is very important to understand that our day schools bring together Jewish youngsters from a variety of national and cultural backgrounds, economic strata and family settings, thereby reflecting in microcosm the diversity which is today's Ontario. Jewish day schools fairly can be viewed as no more and no less than a Jewish public school system.

Sending their children to Jewish day school has become a financial hardship for many of our parents. For those families unable to bear the financial burden, our Jewish community offers significant subsidization. As the cost of providing additional social services mounts, Jewish community funding is being increasingly tapped. Much funding is now being channelled to our senior citizens in order to ensure that their remaining years are lived in comfort and security. Needless to say, the availability of funds for continued subsidization of education may be severely limited.

In the last four years alone, costs for Jewish day schools have risen enormously. For example, in 1984 the average cost to send a child to the Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto was approximately \$3,000. Currently the cost has risen to \$4,000 at Associated, and in other Jewish elementary schools across the province it is as high as \$4,600. At the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, a full-day Jewish secondary school, the tuition is \$5,600.

Jewish day schools, despite large tuition fees, cannot offer the amenities and unique services found in most public schools. Jewish children who require specialized programs due to physical handicaps or learning disabilities, for example, are handled to the best of our schools' abilities, but unfortunately do not have available to them the kinds of resources offered by the public system.

It is true that parents make a choice to have their children educated in this alternative style. The Canadian Jewish Congress argues that, in all fairness, parents making this choice should not have to face such grave economic and social penalties. After all, since the inception of the Jewish day schools in Toronto in 1943, Jewish day school graduates have made valuable contributions to Ontario and Canada. Products of our schools make significant contributions in the professions, academia, finance, commerce, agriculture, the arts, and indeed every facet of Canadian society. Although our graduates play such a positive role in society's evolution,

government has contributed nothing to their elementary and secondary education.

This is the 40th anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the United Nations in 1948. In article 26(3) the charter states, "Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that should be given to their child."

Canada is, of course, a signatory to this declaration. The Jewish congress believes that to grant parents the right of selecting the type of education for their children without providing the financial wherewithal, in effect amounts to giving them no meaningful choice at all.

We believe that if a child is entitled to the whole of an education at public expense, which would be the case if all Jewish day school youngsters were enrolled in publicly supported schools, then surely that same child should be entitled to government funding for the full cost of his or her general studies training in a Jewish school.

The cost to educate two children of an average-income Jewish family is between \$8,000 and \$10,000 per year. The cost of educating two children of a Catholic family in a separate school is not significantly different. Why is a Jewish parent any different from a Catholic parent? Why must a Jewish parent accept financial hardship and personal sacrifice in opting for a Jewish day school education for his children?

The Jewish day school system has proved itself viable. Fair play alone, one would think, dictates that financial support should be forthcoming to Jewish independent schools. To do otherwise, in the eyes of parents and the average Ontarian, perpetuates an injustice in the educational philosophy of this province.

Public opinion surveys taken over the past few years demonstrate that Ontarians have a much fairer view of the issue than do their politicians. For example, the Environics Research Group found that 67 per cent of respondents agreed that private schools should be funded if they meet provincial education standards. Other polls have supported this finding, especially in the light of the extension of funding to Roman Catholic schools. In April 1988, TVOntario's Speaking Out, during a telephone survey, recorded a two-to-one positive response for the funding of independent schools in our province.

1550

Is public schooling the only effective educational philosophy for dealing with pluralism in Ontario? For those who do not believe in freedom

of choice, for those who refuse to understand that there are and there should be alternatives, for those who do not see the imperative of equality of treatment, then indeed the public school system is the only tool. However, for those of us who cherish freedom of choice, who understand that one religious group must not be favoured over all others, independent education, paid for by the government, is a credible and legitimate alternative. Surely the time has come for Ontario to join other provinces and 65 countries by funding independent schools.

Recommendations: In October 1985, the government's Commission on Private Schools in Ontario, written by Dr. Bernard Shapiro, was released. Three years later we find ourselves still awaiting some response to Dr. Shapiro's recommendation for full funding of independent schools in our province. The Jewish community has been more than patient with our government and politicians on this issue. If indeed all three political parties have a vision of Ontario as a true multicultural and pluralistic province, then let them show the necessary moral leadership and act now.

Using the Shapiro commission as a working guide, the Canadian Jewish Congress recommends that the following action be undertaken.

1. That a definitive timetable be established prior to the 1989-90 school year to implement a funding procedure for independent schools;
2. That the government establish an independent task force which would act in a consultative and advisory capacity to develop a funding formula that would include proper accountability. This task force must include members of the independent school community and/or their associations.
3. That Ontario meet its multicultural obligations by ensuring that the recommendations listed are dealt with in a manner consonant with the ethnic and religious diversity of the province of Ontario.

This select committee on education can act as a catalyst for fair and equitable treatment to all religious and cultural groups in our province. We urge you to do so post-haste.

Thank you, Madam Chairman. I am open to questions, which can be addressed either to me or to Bernie Farber.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much for your presentation. We will start off with a question by Mr. Johnston.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Welcome to the committee. It is nice to see Bernie again after many years. I have two things. One, I think a lot

of us do have the sense that a certain section, at least, of the independent schools are fairly elitist. One has had the sense, on the outside, without any particular statistical rationale for this, that the socioeconomic makeup of many of the schools is much higher than the average, so I was interested in your assertion in the paper that is not the case with the Jewish schools.

Do you have an actual statistical analysis that you could provide to the committee that would be useful in terms of those various breakdowns, the socioeconomic and other kinds of indicators that would show that there is a broader range than that?

Mr. Zaionz: Sure. Let me just give you some broad strokes, without going into specific details, and tell you that, if we take the largest of our schools, which is Associated Hebrew Schools, and address it to that particular school, full-fee payers—that is, those who pay the tuition fee of \$4,000 per child—represent approximately 40 per cent of the parent body. Among 60 per cent of the parent body, the children are subvented to varying degrees by the Toronto Jewish Congress, which is the funding body of the Jewish community of Metropolitan Toronto. Of that 60 per cent, more than half pay less than half of the tuition fee. Approximately five to seven per cent pay nothing, or a token sum. Bear in mind that in order to receive subvention from our schools, you have to submit to a means test.

We have tuition fee guidelines which are geared to family income and the fees are determined based on family income and number of children in attendance. So broadly speaking, you can tell our tuition fee guidelines. For example, with a family income of approximately \$12,000 or less there is no fee. From \$12,000 to \$15,000 family income, the fee may be \$100 or \$150, all the way up to full fee which we begin at approximately \$40,000 income for one child. The amount of income is greater if you have two children and the amount increases the more children you have. That will give you a broad profile of the kind of parents in that particular school. It is a very wide spectrum. A considerable number are people who are either average or below average income.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That is very useful.

Mr. Farber: I think also, on the other side, is the cultural aspect of our schools that see children being educated from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds. For example, we have many Sephardic Jews who come from Morocco, Spain and other places. We have children of Russian descent, Ethiopian descent, etc. So it is a

tremendously wide background of cultures and socioeconomic strata.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The second question I really have is based on the other concern that a lot of us have had about the extension of funding to independents and that has to do with public accountability. I know there has been discussion with the Jewish community in the past about methods of dealing with this. I did not notice any major discussion of that in your paper in terms of models that might be appropriate from your perspective, although in your recommendations you talk about accountability style thing. What is the thinking—if I can put it that way—of your group in terms of sort of board status and that kind of thing which would, in some way, give that other equivalency with the Catholic system, which is to say public accountability and election?

Mr. Zaionz: As a matter of principle, we are prepared to accept public accountability. When I say “we”, that is the Canadian Jewish Congress, understanding that each of our schools is independent. Though we have a Board of Jewish Education which sets broad standards for our schools in terms of educational philosophy and in terms of guiding different schools, each school is philosophically independent and has its own board.

The Canadian Jewish Congress, speaking for the community at large, certainly can assure this committee that we accept the principle of accountability, meaning that if there are schools within our system which are not prepared to accept accountability, that is their prerogative, but we would understand that they would not receive funding. In other words, we would recommend funding only to those schools which are prepared to accept the principle of accountability. As to the specifics of accountability, we certainly are prepared to work with the ministry to establish reasonable standards of accountability.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I may be wrong, but a number of years ago, there was some debate about this, was there not? In the 1970s? I am not really sure.

Mr. Zaionz: Are you talking about with the North York Board of Education?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That is what it was. Can you remind me, just refresh my memory about that?

Mr. Zaionz: One of our schools, as a matter of fact it was the Associated Hebrew Schools, and the North York board tried to work out an

accommodation whereby the school would, in fact, become part and parcel of the North York board. There were two principles—the principle of open enrolment and the principle of full curriculum—which were addressed and subsequently referred to the Supreme Court of Ontario. The Supreme Court deemed that in order to become part and parcel of a public school board, open enrolment meant that the school must be open to all children of all faiths and that children can opt out of the religious portion of the program. That was the Supreme Court's decision.

With that in mind, it was the feeling of that school at that particular time, that they could not proceed and become part and parcel of the North York school board.

1600

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It does come back to me now. I was wondering if we have now seen some change in the way the province is dealing with that, especially to do with the one Christian school in the Niagara area which seems to be getting around that and still be part of the board in that area.

Mr. Farber: That has not been completely worked out yet. I remember there was a report about that a few months ago, but the details of that still remain very sketchy. I have not heard what the final outcome of that situation has been.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The school is operating as part of the board, but there are very interesting guidelines. We should probably get for the committee at some point or other some of the information on the Eden school. I have it if the chair has difficulty getting it through the ministry.

Mrs. O'Neill: Is that Alma College?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: No, it is not Alma. It is Eden. I cannot remember the name exactly. I have a file on it. There is a very interesting change in philosophy which may be seen as some kind of precedent in this area.

Mrs. O'Neill: You have the terms of the agreement, do you?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Yes.

Madam Chairman: Perhaps we will leave that with research. If Dr. Gardner has any difficulty getting it, he can contact you.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Sure, that will be great.

Mr. Jackson: My questions were also going to include this last question, but I imagine we can get further clarification from Dr. Shapiro on Thursday afternoon. I know when we contacted

the ministry about both agreements at that point, one that had been struck and one that was formulated, they seemed unable to put it into a policy framework, which is understandable. We will test Dr. Shapiro on Thursday to see if he can put it into a policy framework in terms of their willingness to allow the situation to proceed, both in North York and in the Niagara Peninsula. Is it therefore the position of your congress that a similar arrangement to the one attempted in North York is outside the realm of possibility at this point in time? Are you pursuing other jurisdictional affiliations?

Mr. Zaionz: What has happened in recent history is that North York and two of our schools were negotiating along the broad lines of some kind of affiliation with the board. However, cynic that I am, those discussions took place before the North York board reached its accommodation with the Catholic school board in terms of transferring physical assets and physical plants. Those discussions have sort of petered to a halt since that accommodation was reached.

Mr. Jackson: I have asked this question of all independent and private school groups that have presented themselves. What is your understanding vis-à-vis the ministry with respect to the government releasing its analysis and findings in the Shapiro commission report? Mr. Farber was present when I asked this question.

Mr. Farber: Yes, I was. Certainly, following the Shapiro commission report, there was a lengthy process of response to it. That ended about two years ago, I believe, and we have been told by various ministry officials and others that any time now there is going to be some word. I guess this coming October it is going to be three years, and although we have been told that some word is coming, I also hold some cynicism in that area. I have yet to see it. When I see it, I guess I will believe it. To this date, we have not been informed that anything has been worked out yet.

Mr. Jackson: I was actually seeking to know whether there were any specific approaches made by the congress with respect to that—

Mr. Farber: Oh, yes.

Mr. Jackson:—and if the response you were getting was in any way, shape or form different from that which the Christian schools received.

Mr. Farber: We have met with various ministry officials including the minister himself and there are assurances. I am sure they are working on it, I do not doubt that for a moment, but our concern is that it may get worked on for

seven or eight years before we see anything or it may just become another report that hits the old archives.

Mr. Jackson: I am going to ask you a question about the whole general issue of the Macdonald commission and the financing of education. It is almost impossible for this committee to separate considerations of private school access to funding from the general issue of how we pay for education in this province.

It strikes me that if there is an interministerial committee currently having reported to cabinet, and that the government is waiting to make some form of announcement about Macdonald, this will have serious implications perhaps to tax credits and to a variety of forms of models.

It strikes me as odd that we might proceed with that issue, which deals with the principle of equity, in the absence of dealing with the issue that Shapiro raises, because many of Shapiro's considerations were monetary in nature because of the history.

Do you wish to comment about whether or not the government may be putting the cart before the horse, and, if so, its impact?

Mr. Farber: I will give you our bottom line. We, of course, did monitor the Macdonald commission, which really had more to do with separate schools than it had to do with independent school funding, but none the less, as you suggest, it is going to be an important response.

Mr. Jackson: I am sorry. Are you referring to the Macdonald commission or the Newnham commission? The Newnham commission dealt with separate school funding specifically.

Mr. Farber: Which Macdonald commission are we—

Mr. Jackson: On financing of private school education in the province of Ontario—no, Shapiro's was on private schools; Macdonald's was on financing.

Mr. Farber: The financing of public schools, of education in general.

Mr. Jackson: That is correct.

Mr. Farber: As I recall, back in 1985 or 1986, the figure that was quoted at that time for funding independent schools, coming out of the Ministry of Education's general funding, if you will, was approximately \$40 million to fund all independent schools in the province.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: That is what Bill Davis said.

Mr. Jackson: No, that was \$75 million.

Mr. Farber: We have to measure that, but let us say it has gone up to \$80 million or even to \$100 million, we are talking about a budget of many billions of dollars. It really is not all that much, especially in consideration of the funding that is going into separate schools. As far as we are concerned, the money, if it is not there, can be found, if there is a political will to find it.

Mr. Jackson: I guess you are missing my point. My point is that if this government is on the verge of making a major change in the way in which we obtain the dollars for education, if, for example, as was suggested this morning by the City of Toronto Residents' Liaison Committee on Assessment Reform, we move closer to a model which incorporates a family's ability to pay with a form of tax credits based on property tax and a factoring in of income tax, for example, with a tax credit off your income tax, it strikes me it fairly resembles the model you are dealing with in terms of access for your families on their ability to pay.

I guess the point I was trying to suggest is that rather than look at dollar figures that are now four years old and based on an outdated model—that model is going out the window, or is about to, in terms of access to industrial-commercial assessment for Catholics in Ontario—it just strikes me that if we are to move to a model in Ontario that is more sensitive to private schools, then it stands to reason that you should be accommodated somehow in the major restructuring of education financing in this province.

It strikes me that we may be going about it in the wrong way in terms of putting the cart before the horse, because the economic model is going to always be in question if we have not dealt with private schools. Are we going to be dividing up industrial-commercial assessment in the city of Toronto into a sixth or seventh system, once we get through Catholic, public, francophone, etc.? If we are going to radically change how we fund education in this province, it strikes me that we should be at least getting some indication from the government, in terms of a policy framework, about where it wishes to put the financing of private schools within that framework.

Mr. Farber: I think that is absolutely correct.

Mr. Jackson: It is particularly acute in Toronto because of the effects of market value assessment which is going to drive home the issue of ability to pay, which was really the message we were getting this morning from that group, because there will be staggering increases in Toronto as a result of market value assessment.

I covered a lot, but do you get a better feel for my question now?

1610

Mr. Zaionz: In principle, certainly we feel that the funding of independent schools has to be considered. If the government is thinking of changing the way of funding the educational system generally, that is a component that has to be considered at that time. I would agree with you that must be done before the fact, rather than after, because otherwise we will be right back where we are now. I agree with you that any revision in the method of funding the educational system of this province should take into consideration the needs of independent schools.

Mr. Farber: By not doing that, I would argue that once again the government would be saying what it feels about independent schools, and that is that they are a poor second cousin to the public and separate systems.

Mr. Jackson: It strikes me that if the government radically changes the funding model it may, in and of itself, open up new legal questions. You are now telling a corporation that may not have any Catholic shareholders that it must pay so much towards Catholic education. I am no lawyer by trade—

Mr. Zaionz: Neither am I.

Mr. Jackson: —but I know it will raise some new and interesting legal questions. It strikes me that if this committee is going to deal with the issue of guaranteed access and equality in Ontario, that falls on both sides of the fence, not only for the attendees, who are the children in this province, but it should also be considered in terms of the payee, the person who is carrying the freight. I think there have been some compelling arguments raised on all sides in this issue in front of this committee, and I just hope that the government will—and if it cannot, perhaps this committee can—give some policy guidance in terms of not putting one before the other inappropriately. That may be the result.

Mr. Zaionz: Currently, Jewish parents do pay their taxes to the public school system, in addition to whatever tuition fees they pay to their independent schools.

Mr. Reycraft: I have a couple of brief questions. The first one is related to the accountability issue that Mr. Johnston asked about. I heard part, but not all, of your answer. If you responded to this, by all means let me know. The Report of the Shapiro Commission on Private Schools in Ontario recommended a model of association between boards of indepen-

dent schools and another board of education. Is it your position that you favour that kind of accountability model or do you object to that?

Mr. Zaionz: We can certainly work within that type of a model, yes. There may be some specifics where we may have some reservations but, broadly speaking, within that type of accountability, we certainly are prepared to work.

Mr. Reycraft: The other question dealt with the matter of accessibility. What policy is followed now relative to that? Are there restrictions on students who can be admitted to Jewish schools?

Mr. Zaionz: Yes. The restrictions are that basically Jewish children are the only students enrolled in Jewish day schools. There are reasons for that. First, there is no great call; others have not been beating down the door to get in. We believe the Jewish day school, by its very nature, inculcates children with Jewish values. Throughout history, Jews have had attempts made on them to inculcate them with other values. We do not act as missionaries to others. We think it difficult for children to be inculcated in our schools with Jewish values to go home to non-Jewish homes and find that there are different observances, different levels of religiosity and so on.

I am not an educator, but our educators tell us it is not good for a child to be taught one thing in school and to go home and live a different kind of life outside of school. So our schools are currently open to Jewish children.

Mr. Reycraft: It seems to me that one could say many of those same things about the Roman Catholic system. Accessibility became a very large issue during Bill 30.

Mr. Zaionz: Yes. Some of our schools are prepared to open their doors to non-Jews. The only common thread that runs through our schools with respect to accessibility is that we believe if they are going to be accessible to all children, those children and their parents must opt for the full curriculum.

In other words, because of the nature of the school and the *raison d'être* of the school, we do not accept children who would take only what we call the general studies portion of the program and not take the religious studies portion. We have schools in our system that are prepared to provide full accessibility for children who are prepared to take the full program, regardless of their own religious background and affiliation. Have I answered your question?

Mr. Reycraft: Yes. Could you tell me a bit about how extensive the religious portion of the program is?

Mr. Zaionz: Generally speaking, and it varies from school to school, our school day is broken down to approximately 60 per cent general studies and 40 per cent religious instruction or Jewish studies, as the case may be.

Mr. Jackson: Is that language?

Mr. Zaionz: It is language, it is Bible, it is music; it is a lot of things.

Mr. Jackson: I did not want it to imply it was just religious.

Mr. Zaionz: No, no. In fact, we have schools that are not religious schools that have Jewish education. We have secular schools where there is Jewish education but not necessarily religious education.

Mr. Fleet: I was hoping you might clarify, at least in my mind, a little bit more of the structure you would envisage if there were some kind of government funding, particularly in light of the fact that you refer to the 20 Jewish day schools as being, for all intents and purposes, a Jewish public school system. Are you suggesting that you would be envisaging a series of school systems or do you envisage simply having funding going to independent schools?

Mr. Zaionz: There are a number of options that we have considered, and we have looked at all of them. In principle, we will go with the best way; "best" being best for the public at large, best for government and best for our schools. I do not preclude any possibility.

In my personal view, I do not think we necessarily need different school boards per se. We could end up with a multiplicity of school boards, which may administratively be a big headache and a very costly undertaking. Having said that, if we can integrate somehow into the existing school boards, we have no problem with that and certainly that is an alternative.

We do not have any hard and fixed ways to do it, having looked at many of the ways, except to say that in principle we would do what is best for the public at large, for the public purse and for our schools.

Mr. Fleet: You have indicated in your brief a number of examples or references to other jurisdictions that in one way or another do have funding for independent schools or school systems, and the contention in the brief is that there is no erosion of the public school system elsewhere.

I guess I am wondering to what extent the ability to avoid an erosion, however one defines erosion, is a product of how the system was built from the beginning or whether the erosion problem may become quite a different problem when you have an existing school system—in fact, in Ontario, two systems—already built and you then have some kind of a—

Mr. Zaionz: Change in the system.

Mr. Fleet: Many might perceive it as a backing up of what you have, or a retreat or however one puts it, to then develop a whole bunch of other systems or a whole other funding structure or however it would unfold. I am just wondering how much you can really relate the other experiences.

1620

Mr. Zaionz: For example, I quoted from Saskatchewan. When Bill 30 was up for discussion, there was a select committee of the Legislature that invited presentations from Saskatchewan, which introduced funding to independent schools in 1968, at which point the existing education system was certainly mature. It was not the startup.

There has been no measurable diminution of enrolment in the public school system, nor has there been any significant increase in enrolment in the independent school system. British Columbia introduced funding—I do not remember the date, but it was not that long ago. In other words, it had a mature education system in place when it introduced funding to independent schools. There has been no indication in British Columbia that there has been a significant diminution in percentage of enrolment in the public school system or a significant increase in enrolment in independent school systems.

All those provinces giving direct funding to independent schools—except for Quebec, which goes back a longer period of time—but the other three provinces giving funding have all done so within the last 20 years. None of those provinces has experienced the kind of problems that I alluded to that some people seem to think are problems in terms of the public school system.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much for your presentation today. We shall certainly be considering your comments.

Mr. Zaionz: Thank you very much for having us.

Madam Chairman: I would now like to call on Mrs. Dawn Kay. For the clarification of the members, several of whom have asked about the fact that an individual is presenting to our group,

I would mention that we did have several of our groups this afternoon, in addition to Mrs. Kay, who phoned and asked to present before the select committee. They were put on a waiting list by the clerk and when we had several openings available, we scheduled them in.

Welcome, Mrs. Kay. We are glad you could join us today. I notice that your brief is quite extensive. We would very much like to have time for questions at the end, so perhaps you could highlight your recommendations and your themes, and then the members can read through the entire brief at a later time to read examples. Thank you.

DAWN KAY

Mrs. Kay: Madam Chairman and members of the committee, as a parent, I realize that I am a part of a dynamic educational system, or none of us would be here today. I am a concerned and interested parent, as many are.

There are three areas that I wish to spotlight: the humanization of students, the suitability of the educational program offered and social responsibility in the educational system. My attitude throughout the brief is simple: re-evaluate intellectually and reorganize and change the approach to the system, and I firmly believe that the system can be rejuvenated without pumping a lot of money into it.

I am committed throughout this brief to the sacredness of each human person. I cherish the wholeness of human personality; that is, the fusion of thought and feeling. Most of all, I am committed to other parents, students and teachers in the recovery of dignity, integrity and self-realization, all the inalienable rights of every person, no matter age or gender, involved in guiding change by means of conscious, informed choice.

The humanization of the educational system: In an article entitled "Education's True Goal is Lost in Scramble to Teach the Facts" in the *Toronto Star*, October 1987, Tom Harpur states that the real needs of the child or person being educated tend to be wholly submerged and then forgotten. He goes on to say, "Business wants a trained labour force; the professions want fresh conforming replacements; governments want good, long-suffering citizens; parents want only the Lord knows what."

In the school year 1986-87, one of the top collegiates in Toronto sent to approximately 400 parental homes the procedure for a student to be excused from a gym or pool class. "If you are to be excused for more than one week, bring a

medical certificate to your PE teacher. If you are to be excused for a short period of time, a single period, bring a note from your parents or a medical certificate to your PE teacher. If a note is not received, you will be sent to the vice-principal's office (and you will receive no marks). You must change into your gym uniform. Report to your PE teacher. Your co-operation is expected."

Parents of female children who chose not to swim during a menstrual cycle had to write notes every day to the phys-ed teacher for the duration of this biological function. It took 10 months of appeals to the principal, superintendent, the chairman of the board, the Metro chairman and the director of education to change the rule and allow students to speak for themselves. We do not want to fight for 10 months for basic human rights. All this after the initial appeal by students to the phys-ed teacher resulted in—"those are the rules."

Students are told, "Don't smoke, don't take drugs, don't have sex, don't get pregnant, don't drink, don't use foul language, but do bring a note when you menstruate." How do you think a 14- or 15-year-old feels when she needs to involve two authority figures—(a) a parent, (b) a teacher—in regard to a biological function?

When a new group of students enrolled at a senior public high school in a prominent area of Toronto, it was discovered that for years the phys-ed uniforms that were ordered for both boys and girls were only boys' uniforms. The students had been conditioned to a no-choice situation. How can they become conscious of their own thought processes and feelings, let alone make the connections to construct their own meanings and see that they have choice and can choose how to react in a given situation when they are not exposed to choice?

In initiation procedures of grade 9 students at a collegiate in 1986, students were compelled, no choice, to mount one another in a piggyback style. There was no communication as to the nature of the events, no choice. In a new setting, new school, already the first step taken was to train the students to obey. When actions are compelled—there is no free will—no responsible choice can be made.

Parents complained that compulsory puppy games of this nature for this age group, new students in a new school setting, were demeaning to some students who were given no choice. It was suggested that other more creative ways of initiation such as corn roasts, talent shows, skits, etc., could have been more appropriate. The

principal was concerned about only the "no surprise" element and the head of guidance suggested that that school was, maybe, not the right school for the students of dissenting parents. Orientation activities must be elevated to the meaningful and must enhance the individual self-concept, not demean it.

A student who appealed to a teacher and eventually to the principal in 1987 in regard to marks which had been deducted for a project not handed in on time was frustrated when the principal suggested that she "forget the two marks—don't start World War III over two marks—hold your guns for the big ones."

The hilarity was that the parent had a signed note by all subject teachers in acknowledgement of the fact that the student had been ill for several days and had not even been present on the day on which the project was due. Five subsequent notes by the parent explaining the illness and questioning the unjust treatment and the loss of marks somehow "were lost" on the principal's and two vice-principals' desks. It took four months to reinstate the marks.

At a high school the rule was that when a student was ill and missed tests the parent was required to write a note to the home-room teacher and, should the student have missed two or three tests on that day, separate notes to each subject teacher in turn.

When this procedure was questioned by parents, they suggested that only one note be written to the home-room teacher who would mark the student's attendance record with "ill" or "funeral" or whatever, initial the note and return it to the student who would in turn present it to all subject teachers for perusal and their initials and return it to the parent. The principal adamantly refused to change the rule as he was not going to upset 80 of his teachers—all this at the expense of 1,300 students from approximately 1,200 homes. It took a year before the rule suggested by parents was accepted.

In another high school, students, of course attending school from 9 to 3:30, were required to prepare for three to five tests on any given day. When parents complained that three to five tests were unrealistic in a five-day week, the principal settled on the number three, and that is where it is at to date.

I defy any of you to attend school from 9 to 3:30, be bombarded with factual information in classrooms filled with anywhere from 30 to 40 students and prepare for three tests the next school day. There is no communication among teachers in regard to scheduling workload.

The recommendations are simple:

Humanize the schools: Co-operation between teachers and students must be conducted in a friendly atmosphere of equality and mutual trust. This atmosphere will ensure basic human qualities and will finally rule out the hierarchical and patriarchal pretence of the possession of absolute truth.

School is and must be a partnership between one who teaches and one who learns: Quite often the roles are reversed. Increase the level of participation of the students in the classroom and, as one student so aptly put it at a meeting in November 1987:

"When I was a student at this school, I wanted to learn, but I was not taught critical thought. I was taught not to question authority. Teachers did not treat me with human equality, let alone friendship. I am now at another school. My sister is here now, and I hope you treat her better than you treated me. You should emphasize the need to question, respect and grant equality as a human being. Teachers at this school don't want the students to discuss and question. They only want you to take down what they said."

The response from a student council representative was, "This speaker represents a large number of students, more so than parents realize."

1630

Another high school student stated this year: "In order for high school education to function effectively, teacher and student must be on the same level. Respect and understanding should be present on both sides. Such an environment of equality and comradeship will maximize the amount of learning done in the classroom."

As a parent so adroitly summed it up recently: "I cannot begin to count the occasions when I, the parent, have had to apologize to the daughter in my household in the consideration of her feelings—in the consideration of her point of view that she recognize that I too am in a learning situation and that she experience human equality. The result—we both grow as human beings."

Teach all students how to think: That may be one of the most important points I wish to raise today. The only way to teach anyone how to think is to give choice—not unlimited choice, but preferably in a good-better-best situation. This is whole brain vision and you cease once and for all, eternally, to split the two brains of the human being and keep them apart.

Assist every person to assume responsibility for conscious, informed choice. One parent expressed it very well, "Students must be given

choice, which includes taking control of their own destiny." When choice is restored, useless and outdated programs are abandoned very quickly.

Dehumanization is causing growing alienation and cynicism among the young and one needs to consider here too the increasing reliance on technology, audio-visual equipment, computers, tapes, etc. We are more aware than ever that the student appeal process in the existing stagnant educational system in which there is dubious social responsibility does not always work.

The immediate solution is the appointment of a student ombudsman. Students need a home base outside of the school and the parental home: A person or persons not in the educational system, to advise students of their human rights; a person or persons who would listen and hear what the students are saying, not an all-powerful authority figure but an objective person who has gained wisdom and understanding.

All ages contribute to a society. It is acknowledged today that many of the elderly and adolescents are among the most intuitive in the society. The troublemakers, the dropouts, still have a spark of energy, but what about the vast numbers of students, deadened and conditioned, who are going through the system quietly, not questioning authority, unnoticed, faceless? What a waste of potential, of energy, a country's true gold.

I turn now to the suitability of an educational program in a changing world. This is perhaps one of the most interesting segments. In the article, "Auto Racing Leaning Toward Young Drivers," by Trent Frayne, published in the *Globe and Mail*, Monday, July 18, 1988, Bobby Rahal said "when a guy is driving 200 mph, the first 10 laps seem breathtaking. But then you adjust, and everything gets slower. One of the fabulous things about the human brain is that it can compress time and motion and it gets you up to what's coming at you right away."

He goes on to comment about his eyesight: "I don't think it's how good your eyes are at seeing; I think what's important is how good your eyes are at interpreting what they see, and how quickly that's interpreted." Frayne states that it appears to be this skill that sets the winning drivers apart, "and when Rahal is asked if this can be related to Wayne Gretzky's dominance in hockey, he says yes, there's this sense of seeing the whole picture."

Whole brain vision, no longer the domain of an élite, is in fact an innate possibility for every human being. To explain whole brain vision, let

me simplify Aleksandr Luria, a neuropsychologist. Whole brain knowing is the fusion of the left brain—which is the analytic, sequential, time-oriented serial organization, well adapted to learning and remembering verbal information—and the right brain, which is holistic processing, involved, as an example, in the perception and interpretation of a painting or photograph. Fusion is the highest level of your thinking in which the two hemispheres, intellect and feeling, work together, each complementing the other to give you maximum creative thinking power.

This requires schools to be aware that brain growth and the stages of brain development at age intervals are a scientific fact. In *Education and the Brain*, biologist Herman Epstein says "in adolescence, understanding of abstract conceptual associations is developed." An example is when one first learns to read and one uses the successive processing method of the left brain. To be a highly skilled reader, that is, to incorporate context and meaning, is an accomplishment which requires the use of both brains extensively.

Apparently, under stress one automatically tends to lapse into one's preferential mode of processing, either left or right brain and, in short, one becomes a poorer thinker. Note the implications of this on vast numbers of students being tested in exams and who succumb to anxiety.

Schools rely heavily on IQ tests which are also left-brain-oriented. Thus, right-hemisphericity students may appear less intelligent and tend to do less well on school tests than left-hemisphericity students to whom the tests usually cater. Can you imagine how many die on the battlefield, forced through a system that can stunt one's capacity for a whole life by programming or conditioning one to believe that one is stupid, and the heavy toll on one's self-image? The latter, when sound, has a tremendous power and is a transformative force to change one's whole life.

The system is creating lopsided students who, without questioning, do what they are supposed to do. When they eventually enter society, they perpetuate what they are taught. What I recognize, when I refer to all the examples throughout, is that these educators themselves, at all levels, are a product of the system that is now being questioned.

No longer, therefore, is dominance of one side of the brain over the other an intelligent use of one's potential. Sadly, students with a strong holistic perception, that is, the dominance of the right brain, are handicapped in an educational

system with its emphasis on symbolic language and symbolic mathematics, that is, the analytic left-brain processing. They have difficulty in processing these symbols.

But this neurological minority may be unusually gifted. This kind of situation has been recognized and clarified by people such as Leslie Hart, educational consultant, in his book *Human Brain and Human Learning*.

In *The Aquarian Conspiracy—Personal and Social Transformation in the 1980s*, Marilyn Ferguson states, "The scientific validation of intuition, our term for knowing"—whole brain knowing; people suddenly understand things, they do not know why—"that can't be tracked, has shaken science and is just now having its impact on education."

She goes on to say: "If this instant sensing is disregarded by the linear mind"—left brain—"we should not be surprised. After all, its processes are beyond linear tracking and therefore suspect. And it is mediated by the half of the cortex that does not speak—our essentially mute hemisphere. The right brain cannot verbalize what it knows; its symbols, images or metaphors need to be recognized and reformulated by the left brain before the information is wholly known."

One is dependent on the other. We must now teach students to trust their hunches, to trust themselves.

Tacit knowing, another term for intuition, has always had its defenders, including many of our greatest and most creative scientists and artists. It has been the essential silent partner to all progress. The left brain can organize new information into the existing scheme of things, but it cannot generate new ideas. The right brain sees context and therefore meaning. The one brain complements the other. Feeling—right brain—is as vital as the ability to think—left brain.

Jerome Bruner, one of the leading scientists interested in learning, said: "We must recognize the power of intuition. Our very technology has generated so many options that only intuition can help us choose."

The intelligent person will know what to do in the moment. Therefore, what we are talking about here is how schools must update an understanding of how the brain works and share the understanding with students. Instead of favouring one mode of hemisphere processing over the other, actively training students to rely primarily on only one mode of thinking, they could be helping students to use both modes of processing in a maximum interplay.

This is the educational process, teaching and learning, never-ending, eternal, no matter who is teacher or who is student, as we all learn from one another. When one appreciates the educational process, how children learn, how we all learn, then one is not only involved with a number of teachers and the curriculum, but one begins to understand that process is an integral part of quality assurance, just as components and structure are integral parts. When a system is too rigid, instead of remaining fluid and flexible, there is no room for creativity, which must flourish.

An appreciation of process makes uncertainty bearable. The freedom to be oneself, to create, requires a sense of uncertainty. One begins to trust intuition, one's own inner urgings; one begins to trust oneself. Is this not the goal of all education, to be what no one else but oneself can be?

To be one's unique self is to be an individual, a person who recognizes the importance of choice, who does not feel powerless or frustrated, who recognizes that within himself or herself lies the answer to any problem. An individual is not a robot from a production line or a cookie from a cookie-cutter educational system—programmed thinkers.

An individual restores choice, a flow of creative ideas, introduces us to progress. An individual always recognizes the need for a legitimate system. A system at the expense of individual development creates a sense of powerlessness, and it is this powerlessness that causes violence, drug abuse, alcohol abuse, suicide, etc.

1640

It is interesting to note that much of the alienation and cynicism of the young starts in the home with the parents who do not recognize that their children have thoughts and feelings of any value. Many have never even recognized that they can learn from their children. It is the same attitude that is perpetuated in the school system as many teachers maintain the power and control over the children.

Thus, the students fight back in their own subtle ways to retain the little individuality with which they are left. They rebel with punk haircuts; mismatched, sloppy, undesirable clothing, and a "look tough" demeanour, because they are still learning and are impressionable. This is their message, "Listen to us, hear us." Many also destroy themselves with drugs, alcohol, etc. We push them aside as kooky kids; mindless, tasteless rebels who have no cause.

In *Education and The Brain*, educational psychologist Wittrock says:

"The most important lesson for schools is that it is natural for the brain to be active. That is, the brain actively selects, attends to, organizes, perceives, encodes, stores and retrieves information. Therefore, students should not be expected to be passive recipients of the information presented to them. To learn, students must be invited to construct their own meanings from the information they are taught."

Furthermore: "And although there appears to be some difference in hemisphericity between males and females, there is no educationally relevant, scientific support for the belief that one sex is more, or less, intellectually qualified to pursue academic learning. What is clear from research on hemisphericity is that teaching should be closely related to the cognitive processes of individual learners."

When you teach children how to think, re-educate them to choice and teach them that they are free to construct their own meanings from countless stimuli the world offers, their individual interpretation will be constantly directed to whole brain knowing.

In other words, these young people will be confident in making their own decisions and take charge of their own destinies. They will not blame me, they will not blame you and they will assume responsibility for their own choices. What is more exciting, they will think very carefully before wasting their energies on any activities, such as drugs or alcohol, which would demean them in mind and body.

I wish to deviate for a moment at this point to ask you all to place yourselves in the shoes of a 15-year-old who is studying art in a collegiate in Toronto. Take yourselves back to age 15.

You have to create three pieces of art out of clay. The rules are clear. Before the artwork is fired, ensure that your name is written on the bottom. You comply in regard to two of the pieces but totally forget to do so on the third. They are all completed at different intervals. The work is returned to you. You score high for two pieces but receive zero out of 10 for the third piece.

You appeal the decision. You are dismissed without the teacher listening to what you have to say. You are told he cannot play detective, even though when he questioned whose work it was, only your hand had been raised. You suggest that deducting one or even two marks for a no-name project would be fair before he even starts

marking the project, but the answer is a firm zero.

You appeal the teacher's attitude to the principal. The principal calls you into the office and hands you a piece of writing from the teacher on which he has indicated that the mark that would have been given would have been seven out of 10.

Refer here to the next page, 13(a). The last mark was one of three; the mark would have been seven. The project is marked out of 10. I am not going to take you through all of that, the loss was da da da da—0.155 marks. What the art teacher says is, "Not enough effect to change a mark in the year's average."

But you received a zero and had spent six hours over a period of time creating it. What would you do? The student said, "To hell with it, one gets nowhere," and has become a dropout.

Please turn to page 13(b), entitled "Art Dept., General Evaluation: Philosophy." Let me just go into that for a second. It says here very clearly:

"Evaluation of students will consider the importance of the process as well as the product. Students are expected to perform at a level that meets the requirements of the assignments and/or problem to be solved." So we are dealing here with not only the importance of the process, but also it says further down, "Written comments by teacher and student will evaluate skills, technique, originality, time spent."

OK. The teacher has violated the evaluation philosophy of the art department by giving the student a zero. The art mark is a perfect example of left-brain orientation that thrives on analytical divisions without even taking the right, holistic brain—which excels at depth perception, perceives better through gloom and dimness and peers into the unknown—into consideration. This is an art teacher who cannot nurture learning but kills it.

The recommendations are simple:

1. Eliminate the profit-motivated reward system in the schools. As Marilyn Ferguson states in *The Aquarian Conspiracy*, "The teacher is a steersman, a catalyst, a facilitator, not the first cause." No student should have to please a teacher to be rewarded with good grades. In *Education and the Brain*, Wittrock says that "from the brain sciences it is clear that the student is now at the centre and the teacher's role is that of facilitating a natural process." But he also states that "the teacher more than the subject matter is given new importance."

2. Reduce class size drastically in order for teachers to relate to the cognitive processes of

individual learners. This can be done by restructuring the system, not adding to it. Talented, sensitive teachers cannot function in a rigid, authoritarian system. The teaching becomes mechanical and is achievement-gearred rather than enjoyable. The teacher has become an evaluator at the expense of the emphasis on human interaction. In an equal partnership, teachers will reveal themselves more, feelings and motivations will emerge and the teachers will teach from inside out, be themselves. Teachers must be freed up to be themselves and, in turn, they will free up the students. The teachers are more important than the subject matter.

3. The relationship between teacher and student must be equal. A true teacher will learn and be transformed by the relationship. James MacGregor Burns, a historian, pointed out "that a dictator is not a true leader, because he is not open to input from his followers. A closed teacher...the mere power wielder...is not a true teacher." Teachers who are not committed to teaching and learning in a relationship with students of mutual recognition cannot be sustained by the educational system at the expense of students and taxpayers.

I come very briefly now to the social responsibility. The brain sciences are teaching us now that the right holistic brain can see patterns and wholes and that incorporating the right brain is essential for understanding content, for detecting meaning and in the understanding of relationships.

Parents, teachers, students, administrators, planners, everyone in the educational system are accountable to one another and, in turn, accountable to co-operate with all other institutions to form society as a whole. In education today, management is a top-down approach that urgently requires a feedback loop from students and parents.

A recent incident in a top collegiate left most parents and students involved in a drama course speechless. The grade 10 and 11 dramatic arts course outline read as follows—

Madam Chairman: I just wondered if I might interrupt for a moment. I am afraid we are not going to have time for questions at all. I was wondering if, perhaps instead of reading through the example, we could go directly to your recommendations out of it. Would that be possible?

Mrs. Kay: Yes, certainly.

The system is top heavy with people who have lost touch with themselves as young children and adolescent students. They do not know how

students have changed. This top-heavy structure paralyses them and that is why they cannot change. Compare the salaries in a board paid out to nonteaching staff with those of the teaching staff. Put the money back into the classroom with the students for whom it was intended. Every five years everyone from the assistant head of a department to vice-principal, principal, superintendent, advisers, consultants and directors of education could go back into the classroom. If one has not forged any change to make a difference in five years, one will not do so after five years.

Any leader from assistant head of a department and up in the educational system is a person with vision, secure and confident in communicating his or her ability to look at any situation in different ways. Such a person can generate alternatives and options, proceed to choose one of the options and know why he or she has chosen it. Such a person is an authentic leader and will inspire everybody.

The educational system, at the expense of students and ever-increasing burdens on the taxpayer, can no longer sustain anyone who cannot choose him or herself, fulfil his or her potential and who chooses a strategy of self-denial. No one can be persuaded by argument or emotional plea to change. We help others to strengthen themselves by our changed lives as an example. As Professor Koestenbaum in his book *The Heart of Business* states, "When people grow, everything around them grows and changes." The educational system must become a value-for-value system.

Appoint synthesizers. A synthesizer is a person with a sense of the whole picture, the people who have whole brain vision. There may be people with this ability who are blocked in the hierarchical educational system under a director of education, for instance. Surface them.

I reference again *The Aquarian Conspiracy*. Demystification, decentralization, despecialization are the order of the day. The barriers among the different branches of knowledge are coming down. Specialization with its now attendant narrowing of vision is giving way to the generalist, a person willing to diversify many times in a lifetime. Again from *The Aquarian Conspiracy*, "Most of the exciting changes and successes in education's new incarnation reflect its return to its proper keepers—the community and the learner."

4. Teachers, parents and students must jointly decide the important issues of policy and curriculum and hire new staff members.

1650

In conclusion, I understand that what we have had to date has neither been good or bad, but that everything we are experiencing as students, parents or teachers in the educational system is helping all of us to forge a new kind of ego, a fused ego, a more fundamental self or human core which is capable of transcending mind/body dualism, capable of bridging intellect and feeling, the masculine and feminine sides of every person and so on, and that all this is an ongoing, eternal learning process that has not excluded suffering, anxiety and pain.

However, to learn and change is one thing. To perpetuate the vicious, destructive cycles by not changing, exploring, re-evaluating and restructuring generation after generation, without incorporating humanistic principles which make us more human, which surely is the only goal in life, is to destroy ourselves and our children. I leave the strategic restructuring of the educational system, with an eye on the year 2000, in your capable hands. Thank you for this opportunity.

Madam Chairman: Thank you for your very well thought out and comprehensive brief. We have had a number of educators who have come before us and talked about the need for critical thinking, but nobody has pointed out what an important component choice is. I think you have certainly outlined that point very well in the brief. For questions, I have Mr. Mahoney on the list.

Mr. Mahoney: It is a fascinating brief. The concept of trying to humanize the school system goes hand in hand with an attempt to, I suggest, try to humanize the teenager. I am the father of three and know that sometimes that can be difficult.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Role model difficulty.

Mr. Mahoney: That is right. They do not have much to look up to.

If you go into the schools—and I assume you have done that and been involved in the school system—there are times—

Mrs. Kay: I was actually. I was involved in the school system.

Mr. Mahoney: —when there are discipline problems. There are times when young people, at the tender age of 14 or 15, are not really sure what they want and they are looking for some leadership. I would be concerned that perhaps the move to the extreme might take away that sense of leadership by the teaching staff. Having said that, I understand from my own education the concept of rote, “Do what you are told” and “Sit

down and be quiet.” I quite agree that it is not as healthy as having someone think.

I do not know if you can go to what I would consider the extreme level that you are recommending in your brief, which would just more or less seem to indicate that the kids would be freed up to make whatever choice they saw fit. I would be concerned about that.

Mrs. Kay: As I mentioned in the brief, we are not talking here about indiscriminate choice. We are talking about choice when we are dealing with whole brain fusion in the knowledge and understanding that the two brains now, the kind of process which evolution is all about, is happening to so many people today. We are talking about choice between good, better and best. The psychotechnologies tell us today that you can change the past on a neuronal level, which means that by dealing with the present situation you can actually change the genetic memory patterns in the brain cells.

What we are looking at here is not indiscriminate choice, but a choice between good, better and best; not good/evil; not good/bad; not the infernal, hellish splitting, keeping them split, divisive and tuned out from themselves, but actually giving them a choice between good, better and best. They are still accountable for whatever choice it is that they make. They are still responsible for the choice they make. By doing that, they learn. That is the choice.

Mr. Mahoney: It seems to me to be a perfect world that you are putting out in that concept. In dealing with human beings, I am not sure of that perfect concept. I have been a coach of hockey teams for a lot of years, mostly with teen-age kids between the ages of 13 and 16. It is part of their education, a part of their growing up and a part of the team concept and the leadership concept, and I am not sure it is attainable.

I think you have made some fascinating points here, very clearly the one about the young lady having to bring in a note about her menstrual cycle. On the other hand, if there is a 14-year-old boy who just decides he wants to skip gym, I think there has to be a balance there.

Mrs. Kay: Certainly. The balance is exactly what we ask for. Again, I say the choice is between good, better and best. The word “perfection” is a left-brain, analytical word. When you aspire to perfection, you are not aspiring to the fusion of the two brains, which is a wholeness, which means that the information the person has in the left brain must get passed through to the feeling brain and then back again.

As I mentioned, when you give a person a choice in this good-better-best situation, he is going to pass the information through the feeling area, which helps him to arrive at the proper decision. He will not choose anything that will destroy or demean himself. I can promise you that.

Mr. Mahoney: I know some kids who have not used either of those brains.

Mrs. Kay: Try it.

Mr. Keyes: Now we know why so many people are talked about as not having half a brain.

Mr. Mahoney: That is right. When you see somebody going left around a corner, you know what is going on.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: These tapes are available.

Mr. Mahoney: It is left wing that we are concerned about, not the left brain.

Mr. Keyes: I guess I am following up on the same point Mr. Mahoney was making. I think what you are saying works beautifully if we bring a group of children into our school system who have come from the wholeness of backgrounds that we all wish they could come from.

Having also spent a fair time in the educational system, I think the young people we get in there today right from the very beginning have all these other phenomenal pressures on them. To try to get them to the point of developing what you want becomes a challenge that I am sure many teachers would find so awesome that they would feel they just could not do it.

In these two weeks, we are looking at the philosophy and aims of education. I find the things you have recommended here are still possible and should be highlighted in our system. You want us to humanize schools. I am sure no one one has said other than that for years. You want a partnership between the learner and those who teach. That is certainly inherent in anything that has been said, as are the teaching of thinking skills, choice, etc. What you have said in many ways really reflects what the ministry has been saying for years.

Mrs. Kay: May I just interrupt for a second? You are absolutely right. When you go to all the boards of education, it is all there in theory. It is there on the most beautiful pieces of paper that they send out to the parents. The point is that it is not there in practice. It is not going on. Upon close scrutiny, it is not happening. My examples are current. It is not happening. This is the point.

We deal with teenagers. Something seems to go wrong with teenagers. You can control them

until that point and then something happens; rightly so. They are dealing with all kinds of biological functions. They are dealing with changes. They have to rebel. They are the ones who have to blow open closed structures and no-choice situations. They have to deal with the year 2000, as Wittrock says here, when they will have have so many stimuli that are going to come at them. You have the music, the movies, the video concerts, whatever the case may be. If you cannot approach it from the centre, if you have no sense of self, if you have no core—that is what I am talking about; not left, not right, but a core.

That core can be obtained, very interestingly enough, by dealing with the situation in the present moment. Forget what went on in the past; forget what is to come in the future; deal with the situation in the present. The psychotechnologists advise that you can change the past by dealing with something in the moment.

Let me share with you that one of the most incredible things my daughter taught me was when she was six years old. She said: "Excuse me, you have been carrying that with you since last week. You can't bring last week into now. Now is now."

I learned how to think. We now no longer bring in anything that has not been dealt with and we express our feelings. Believe me, it is sometimes hell on the neighbours, for 10, 15 or 20 minutes, but—among other things, I answer as a psychologist—it is a healthy expression. It is another expression, and it brings in the right brain, the feeling area.

1700

Mr. Keyes: Just to carry on, it has certain implications for teachers, those who have been in the system for a fair length of time. I guess you would probably give support to trying to provide more assistance, for teachers to go back to look at how children learn, etc., the whole-brain-vision concept you have referred to, because if you do not do that—we have done what others suggested, reducing class size. As a government, we have done that now in the primary years when we feel that to do such will provide teachers more opportunity to look at that whole child. But what other implications do you see for teachers? I think phenomenal work has to go on at that level, and you almost have to retrain the present generation of teachers.

Mrs. Kay: Yes, it is the retraining. But again, the retraining can be accomplished very easily when dealing with the situation in the present. If you, for instance, were to take some time just to read that example of the drama, what have you,

that I brought in where there was malfeasance on the part of the teacher. The teacher bypassed parental consent, did all kinds of things, eventually went into extending the legal school day, etc. That type of teacher is a product of the system.

Ladies and gentlemen, I was a part not only of that system, but I went through university degrees, you name them, regurgitating everything and I got high scores. It was only at around age 36 where I had to take a good look at myself. I was a human robot. I had to bring in the feeling brain, and that was when I could handle life in a situation of living in the present moment.

The teachers, many of them, are blocked up. They have been trained like I was, like all of you, only to think, bombarded with facts, regurgitating the facts in exams. After regurgitating the facts, you move from point A, you get your first grade or your first degree; you move on to B, you get your second degree. When I went in to do some post-graduate work at a university at age 36, I was again taught by one of the professors, "If you want this degree, you're going to have to do what I tell you to do." It was at that time that I decided I no longer needed a piece of paper and have been very successful diversifying, doing other things.

You can retrain those. There are many of these teachers in the system who are blocked by principals and heads of departments who cannot bring in their feeling. You are going to have to deal with these situations, because to go and pump more money—and from the director of education all the way down, they are left-brain-oriented. They must be given an opportunity to retrain, as I say, and then if they have not—

Ladies and gentlemen, we have all diversified in society. We are going to have to do that. We cannot secure positions for people. There is an example in this brief where one teacher went out to try to establish her own business. Her position was held open for three, four years as she took leaves of absence; in and out, in and out, but maintained the security of the job. The examples abound. It prevents new blood from coming in, new teachers from coming in. It keeps the students deadened under such a teacher because she does not have courage to risk, which is a whole-brain-vision requirement, and that kind of thing.

There are many good things happening—emotional response to literature, feeling response to literature. History today—there is the attempt to teach history; not just the facts, but if you were in a war how would you feel, the kind

of Steven Spielberg Empire of the Sun kind of setup that is happening.

Exciting things are happening, but I think we are dealing here with a situation where really they are going to be given a good/better/best choice; retrain, and if they cannot—as I said, you can do nothing about somebody who has embarked on a course of self-denial, people like that; you can only be an example. But the system can no longer sustain that, not at the expense of the students who have to go into the year 2000 with stimuli, as I say, being bombarded at them. They must have an ability to instantaneously make a decision and assume responsibility for that decision.

Mr. Keyes: Just very quickly, I presume then you would support strongly the idea of term appointments for anyone in the administrative roles.

Mrs. Kay: Up to five years, yes.

Mr. Keyes: For five years.

Mrs. Kay: Yes.

Mr. Keyes: Second, if we wanted to look at the Lloyd Dennis of 20 years ago and the Radwanski of today, I think you would lean much more strongly towards Lloyd Dennis and his view of the child.

Mrs. Kay: I think that went a little to the extreme. When it came in it served a purpose. It drew attention to the feeling area, but we have to swing back, you see, because we are not talking here about a reliance on feeling and we are not talking about reliance on thinking; we are talking about fusion, something with which physicists are grappling at the moment.

Fusion is something they cannot study on the outside yet because they have not been able to put it together, but it is taking place in a number of people via an evolutionary process that is occurring in the brain. The prototypes of this kind of whole-brain vision were Christ, Shakespeare, Walt Whitman, Honoré de Balzac, Spinoza, and people now like Wayne Gretzky and Rahal.

It is a common happening that is occurring. Many of the students have this potential. Many of the teachers have this potential.

Mr. Keyes: Quickly, with a Gretzky, did it really happen outside of himself, by outside influences? I doubt if it did. I do not think it did. I think it was an internal—

Mrs. Kay: No, it came from a process inside.

Mr. Keyes: That is right. The school system may not be able to provide that to the extent you have.

Mrs. Kay: Yes, you can. You can retrain teachers. If you look at me, everything is reversed, but when you are me—in other words, can you imagine the incredible? Take, for instance, a disease like AIDS, which is spread by people becoming fixated on one another pathologically and not being able, in the relationship, to move into what Martin Buber references as an “I-thou.” As I am I, I see myself in you. When you are looking at a situation, you are not the situation.

What people with whole-brain vision have attained is that they manage to get themselves turned around and all three aspects fuse in one. They are it. At the same time that I am I, I can place myself in your shoes and I can feel anything that you are feeling. I can experience anything that you are feeling; therefore I am not going to fixate on you. Were you the same sex as I, we would move out of that relationship into an I-thou.

We are dealing here with—if you teach them how to think, we are dealing with what causes disease, not the effect that it is a virus that is

going to kill you all, but something which you can avoid by learning how to think, by teaching them how to think.

What schools are doing, and many teachers, is that they teach them what to think, not how to think. You can take anyone and say, “I am going to give you a choice”; not indiscriminately; sometimes you can narrow it down to two, but it must always be a good-better or good-best. Then you do split the brain in the moment you are dealing with that child or that student, and it is incredible. They begin to trust themselves. Something happens. Miracles begin to happen and it is that we must not rule out.

Madam Chairman: Mrs. Kay, on behalf of the committee, I would like to express appreciation for the time and effort you have put into bringing your fresh ideas and philosophy to our committee. I very much thank you for that.

Mrs. Kay: Thank you very much.

The committee adjourned at 5:08 p.m.

CONTENTS

Monday, July 25, 1988

Philosophy and Goals of Education	E-293
Down Syndrome Association of Metropolitan Toronto	E-293
Down Syndrome Association of York Region	E-293
Integration Action Group	E-293
City of Toronto Residents' Liaison Committee on Assessment Reform	E-302
Kingston Area School to Employment Council	E-310
Afternoon sitting	E-319
Direction jeunesse	E-319
Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools	E-325
Ontario Jewish Association for Equity in Education	E-334
Dawn Kay	E-342
Adjournment	E-351

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Chairman: Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)**Vice-Chairman:**

Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)

Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)

Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)

Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)

Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)

Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)

Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)

O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)

Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)

Substitutions:

Beer, Charles (York North L) for Mrs. O'Neill

Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L) for Mr. Miclash

Stoner, Norah (Durham West L) for Mr. Miclash

Clerk: Mellor, Lynn**Staff:**

Gardner, Dr. Robert J. L., Assistant Chief, Legislative Research Service

Witnesses/Témoins:**From the Down Syndrome Association of York Region:**

Langdon, Lynda, Chairperson, Human Rights Committee

From the Integration Action Group:

Dolmage, Marilyn, Director

Woronko, Dr. Stan, Past President

From the Down Syndrome Association of Metropolitan Toronto:

Marinec-Jaffer, Frances, Director; Director, IAG

Bailey, Louise, President

From the City of Toronto Residents' Liaison Committee on Assessment Reform:

MacGregor, Storm

Ritch, Dale

Milbrandt, George

From the Kingston Area School to Employment Council:

Merrin, Jay, Chairman

McConkey, Skip, Executive Director

De Direction jeunesse:

Boileau, Lucie, présidente

Morris, Kim, membre du conseil d'administration

From the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools:

Guldemond, Adrian, Executive Director

Hultink, Hank, Executive Director, Ontario Christian School Teachers' Association

From the Ontario Jewish Association for Equity in Education:

Zaionz, Charles, Chairman, Ontario Region

Farber, Bernard M., Director

Individual Presentation:

Kay, Dawn



No. E-9

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Select Committee on Education
Philosophy and Goals of Education



First Session, 34th Parliament
Tuesday, July 26, 1988

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario
Editor of Debates: Peter Brannan

CONTENTS

Contents of the proceedings reported in this issue of Hansard appears at the back, together with a list of the members of the committee and other members and witnesses taking part.

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues can be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at (416) 965-2159.

Hansard subscription price is \$16.00 per session, from: Sessional Subscription Service, Information Services Branch, Ministry of Government Services, 5th Floor, 880 Bay Street, Toronto, M7A 1N8. Phone (416) 965-2238.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Tuesday, July 26, 1988

The committee met at 10:09 a.m. in room 151.

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS OF EDUCATION (continued)

Madam Chairman: I would like to open this morning's session of the select committee on education. I would particularly like to welcome our first group this morning, the Ontario Metis and Aboriginal Association. Welcome, gentlemen. We understand you have a presentation that has been distributed to the members. If you would like to allow enough time at the end for questions, we would be very appreciative. You may begin whenever you are ready. Would you please start by introducing yourself for purposes of electronic Hansard.

ONTARIO METIS AND ABORIGINAL ASSOCIATION

Mr. Recollet: As you have mentioned, we are from the Ontario Metis and Aboriginal Association. My name is Charles Recollet, the president. To my left is Olaf Bjornaa, our second vice-president. To my immediate right, we have Henry Wetelainen, who is our first vice-president. Right near the end, we have Harold Weaver, who is our education research specialist. With those brief introductions, you will note on the draft copy we distributed, it is, as it states, a draft. We had to make some last-minute changes last night and we will be mailing the final copy to the select committee in the very near future.

1010

As president of the Ontario Metis and Aboriginal Association, I wish to express my deep appreciation for this first opportunity to appear before the select committee on education and to assure this committee of our continued collaboration in any and all efforts in the planning, implementation and evaluation of both short-term and long-term projects aimed at improving the quality of education here in Ontario. We are pleased to share our reflections on issues related to educational philosophy and goals. Just as a reminder to the participants here, the federal government recognizes us in the Canadian Constitution under section 35.

Premier David Peterson and Attorney General Ian Scott are also on record as being very supportive in numerous quests for aboriginal self-government, but there is a whole level of government that does not recognize our constitutional rights, which is the municipal government. The Ontario Metis and Aboriginal Association is a province-wide political organization representing approximately 230,000 Metis, nonstatus and status Indians living off reserve. We were founded in 1971. OMAA offers programs and services in housing, child and family services, cultural language, economic and political development and education, which are and will lead towards aboriginal self-government.

We are here today to respond to a serious, intolerable problem—the miseducation of native youth in Ontario. Are you, honourable members, aware that many of our native youth from Ontario are forced to abandon Ontario to go to the United States to receive an equal right to education? A study recently released by the Assembly of First Nations revealed the national dropout rate of natives to be approximately 80 per cent. We have no reason to believe that the situation is significantly different for our off-reserve students in Ontario, recognizing that Ontario has been behind other provinces, such as Quebec, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, for example, in dollar-matching for native education.

Our native drop-out study, even at this preliminary point, reveals the following: poor or nonexistent relations between schools and the native community; a curriculum devoid of accurate native content or curriculum materials of little relevance; school counsellors with minimal, if any, rapport with natives—if a sense of self-worth is established in native students at the very beginning, it would eliminate the need for social counsellors—an inhospitable environment for native youth; and school administrators unaware of how to deal with causes of incidents involving native children, even when they choose to admit their existence.

I might go on to say our native youth are also having to leave their respective communities, usually a remote or rural setting, and to travel into urban areas. We also have our native youth having to take long bus rides to and from their communities to attend schools within Ontario.

We find this to be a very serious cultural shock to our young leaders of today. We also find that there is no education for traditional values or skills which were handed down from our forefathers and our previous elders, such as hunting, fishing and trapping, which have been neglected.

There are school boards without policies on harassment of native students, as well as affirmative action/employment equity policies for teachers, staff, administrators and trustees. Collaboration is suggested with OMAA in establishing in-service programs for teachers, curricula and curricular materials for students, and training for native and other school trustees.

To sum up this particular section, at OMAA we feel that racism, discrimination and prejudice are still rampant in our provincial school systems.

Some goals for education for native students: We feel the educational goals that we have for native students should be preparing students to gain the necessary skills for successful living, starting at the primary school level, in order to contribute positively both to the native and broader communities; reinforcing the student's cultural identity; and providing a model for the non-native population to develop a heightened awareness of and respect for the native cultural heritage, thus developing a positive self-image.

As to recommendations for educational philosophy and goals aimed at raising the self-esteem of our native population, I must warn you that our recommendations recognize (1) the need for the transformation of our school system and (2) the redistribution of quality education throughout the province, north as well as the south.

In relation to curriculum and native languages in the schools, let me begin by stating our concurrence with the Ministry of Education publication, *Native as a Second Language*, which notes: "Language carries within it the spirit, culture, history and philosophy of a people. It is the principal means by which culture is preserved and transmitted from one generation to another. The native people of Ontario are, therefore, justly concerned that their languages and culture are being lost." I might add in this area, when you talk about native as a second language, in some of our remote communities a lot of our people who are isolated speak Cree as the only language. Sometimes we feel that English is their second language.

Let me also remind you of the following: Of the 53 native languages in Canada, only three have very strong chances of survival over the

next decade: Cree, Ojibway and Inuktitut. Eight others are facing extinction, 29 are deteriorating very rapidly and 13 are moderately endangered. If these languages disappear in Canada, they will disappear from the face of the earth. Unlike ethnic groups, native people have no repository of native languages existing outside Canada.

A regional Ministry of Education official has clearly pinpointed our concerns with native language as a second language in the education system as follows: "Several education officials have assumed that native-as-a-second language policy only affects the native community, which they perceive as the band community or a neighbouring reserve."

In other words, our clients are not recognized by Ontario's education officials at the local board level. Yet our constituents are in more immediate danger of losing their languages since 77.7 per cent of off-reserve people begin life with English as their mother tongue. However, if OMAA's constituents become highly informed about the policy and make their wishes known formally through a school board's trustee system, all will work together to resolve problems along the way.

Social sciences and humanities: The existing social science and humanities programs of Ontario schools, colleges and universities that teach students the history of Canada today examine cultures through history which began at the time of European contact. This results in native culture being frozen as if it is in a time warp. The concept of "being native" takes on a near-exclusive identification with a lifestyle that existed before the loss of mobility. We feel that is somewhere between 100 to 300 years. The concept is reinforced in history texts, always from a non-native perspective, that talk about native culture in the past tense and place anthropological emphasis on what used to be.

The problem: This is a narrow and limited view of culture that results in numbers of native students having their identity undermined and having no reason to believe in their culture. Compound this with the misconception that the only real natives exist in another time and space and we create students that have within our own homeland very little to grab on to in forming a positive self-image. We end with very damaged, insecure and angry human beings and, consequently, a very damaged, insecure and angry community.

1020

Our recommendation: Curriculum must be revised to teach children that native cultural beliefs and values do transcend time and

contribute to the uniqueness of a people. Holistically, culture must be viewed as a living dynamic composed of all the social institutions that ensure the transference of beliefs, values, languages and traditions. A native person should not have to struggle for recognition but simply be accepted as a human being.

The existing curricula will not change without effort and commitment from both the native community and the Ministry of Education. Compounding this problem is the way the native community feels it has no role in the Ministry of Education decision-making process.

In relation to community education advocates, very few, if any, off-reserve native people exercise their rights through school board participation. There is a misconception among native people that they do not even have this right, or they feel that any suggestions made to boards will ultimately result in failure. The school boards and other decision-making bodies within the school system are viewed as almost omnipotent forces that do not feel they have to respond to the needs of the off-reserve community.

The problem we find here is that native people will not overcome this misconception overnight and begin to demand and exercise their rights to participate in decision-making.

Our recommendation here: As a first step, community education advocates should be hired in the five Ontario Metis and Aboriginal Association zones, which cover all of Ontario. They would serve as a liaison between the native community and the school boards. These community education advocates should be funded by the Ministry of Education.

Some of the major responsibilities of these community education advocates would be to facilitate the implementation of the native-as-a-second-language mandate already authorized by the Minister of Education; to educate native people on their rights to participate in school boards, etc; to stimulate, encourage and, to a certain degree, train off-reserve people to participate effectively in the development of education programs best suited to their needs; to institute the development of special programs to suit the specific requirement of the community—again, as I must mention, we talk about hunting, fishing and trapping, our traditional skills which are slowly being lost, and even native language as a first language also—and to educate constituents that co-operative education is available to all native students requesting it.

Other areas of concern include mandatory policies of benefit to the native population for

every board of education and every college and university in Ontario; an Ontario-wide institute of research on aboriginal society and culture, to be affiliated with but not controlled or administered by an Ontario university, employing native people to do research on all aspects of aboriginal society and culture and to produce reports, materials, textbooks and curricula for use by other educational institutions; preparation and dissemination through the school system of textbooks and other teaching materials which take serious account of aboriginal history, rights, cultures and values;

An assurance that the Ministry of Education and all school boards, as well as the Ministry of Colleges and Universities and its components, are reflective of the off-reserve native population and receptive to its concerns; a prerequisite for receiving an Ontario teaching licence be compulsory training in native studies and mandatory academic and practicum elements in provincial teacher-training programs related to the constitutional and political rights of aboriginal peoples, their cultures, social systems, objectives and goals and their contemporary economic and living conditions; career training for aboriginal teachers who wish to become senior administrators in the schools; academic and career counselling services attuned to and supportive of the ambitions of aboriginal peoples to attain a higher education; and streaming should be abolished.

In summary, we suggest to the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, use all resources available to facilitate the implementation of the above-stated policies.

If, on an international scene, people as diverse as the French, Germans, Chinese, Russians, etc., are exorcising themselves of historical abuses, why cannot Canadians? Would it not be wonderful if in the year 2000 Ontarians could look back with pride to the year 1988 as a time when the OMAA's constituents became full participants in our constitutional system, which would be a major step towards having self-government in Ontario? The government of Ontario will thus enable us, as first peoples of Ontario, to have greater participation in the education system here in Ontario.

In other words, what I am saying is as first peoples who are inhabitants of Ontario and of Canada, we feel with the current education system OMAA's constituents are still being treated as third-class citizens, in the past and in today's day and age.

In conclusion, we have trusted you with the education of our children. We feel you have failed us terribly. You have left us with children with a negative self-image. They have dropped out of your schools. They have left the provinces and province. You have led us towards high suicide rates and substance abuse, in reference to drugs and alcohol.

This demonstrates to us that the current system is not working. We demand a change and are now prepared to exercise our right to the education of our children, which we strongly believe is our right to determine our future, which we feel down the road is a very strong element towards achieving self-government. Thank you. I guess we are prepared for questions.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Recollet. We have approximately 20 to 25 minutes, I think, for questions. We will start off with Mr. Johnston, followed by Mr. Keyes.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Thank you for the report. It does not pull any punches. I think your summation, looking at the objective realities of what has happened to native kids on and off reserve, Metis nonstatus and status, there has been a clear failure of the education system to meet the needs of those kids. What I would like to hear a little bit about from you is what involvement at the present time the province-wide association has with the ministry in issues of curriculum and other matters that you basically say there is almost no connection on.

I think you said your population feels that it has no say in the development of policy. I want to know what there is presently out there that you do at a provincial level, and then maybe with some of the associations of trustees, etc., that exist around the province. Do you have a committee that works specifically with the Ministry of Education on any elements of education policy?

Mr. Recollet: No. At this point in time we do not have any such committee in force. As I mentioned, we do have an educational research specialist, who is for a short term—very minimal—and he is currently researching some communities within Ontario, each of our five respective zones, to study one very small component: the dropout rate. That does not even hit all levels of education. We feel Ontario can do more and we feel we have the political vehicle; not only the political vehicle but also the expertise.

As I mentioned, I think now is the time to make some of those decisions to hand over some of that control to our association so we can ensure that our people get a higher degree or higher education in order that they can be more

competitive, not only with the traditional skills handed down from their forefathers but also to cope with the ever-increasing changing world which all of you reside in.

1030

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Is there somebody in the Ministry of Education who is supposed to be the liaison with your association?

Mr. Recollet: We do have a liaison and I think our specialist, Dr. Harold Weaver, has been working with him: Keith Lickers. We have been in contact with other individuals such as Mr. Tate. He has been doing some work with us. Right now we can name names, but that is not going to solve the problem unless we get a greater commitment or recommendation from this committee to take to the cabinet committee as a whole or to the cabinet at Queen's Park and get some sort of legislation passed to ensure that the educational rights of our current and future generations are going to be protected in the educational school systems.

We can start the process by starting to work to set up committees, but we have to ensure that the political will is there. The only way to get that done is to have some piece of legislation with full participation right from the very beginning of our association to ensure that our people, our constituents, our future and current generations will not take the doom path and revert to the rural areas and, as I mentioned, to suicide and substance abuse, which we are going to try to curtail.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: What about the other end of things? That is to say, we have the various boards of education across the province. Obviously, there are problems at the local level between a board and local representatives of your association in terms of interaction. But what about the associations? For instance, we have the Ontario Separate School Trustees' Association, which is up next after you. There are about four or five of these big trustee associations across the province. Do you have any ongoing links with them and their membership?

Mr. Wetelainen: I will respond to that. I think what we are saying is that there are no organizations that are recognizing the off-reserve people. They have one concept of native people, which is the band. Once the people live there, if they are in the society, there seems to be no recognition of the fact that these are distinct people recognized under the Canadian Constitution. There are Metis and nonstatus people living within their communities. They figure that they

are in the communities and they are then not native people any more. Their needs have not changed because they reside in one place or the other.

In fact, their needs off the reserve are usually greater. We found that school boards across the province do not recognize this fact. We asked for statistics from school boards. They do not keep those type of statistics. We asked for dropout rates from school boards. They do not keep those type of rates. They said, "We know that they are in the school system but we cannot give you the numbers." We asked some of the school boards to identify the students and the families. They said, "We cannot do that for you either."

There seems to be a total lack of co-operation. They know the problem is there, but the status quo seems to be: "Let's coast along. Maybe it will go away." It has not for 300 years.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I was just actually looking to see if there were any exceptions to that or if there were any associations where you had developed the links. What about in your research, Harold? Can you tell us a little bit about where your research on the dropout situation is at this point and what you are trying to accomplish?

Mr. Weaver: Let me just go back, before answering your question. One of the priorities, in addition to the actual research that I have been trying to do, is to at least open up dialogue between our organization and the school boards, especially in northern Ontario, as well as the Ministry of Education's regional offices, northeast, north, midnorth and northwest, and with the Northern Ontario School Trustees' Association, NOSTA, for example.

At least there are people there who recognize that we can play a very important role. But the issue is that they do not have access to the resources which would allow us to do so. They recognize that they cannot do the job; yet they are unwillingly up to now to release resources to have us do the job, although they realize our organization's competence in the area.

At this point in the dropout study, we have been looking at selected communities in the north where there are significant numbers of off-reserve Metis and status and nonstatus natives. We have been interviewing and administering questionnaires to principals, guidance counselors and other people in the system. The tentative results are stated on pages 3 and 4, our observations at this point. The next step is to actually interview the students themselves who have dropped out.

As my colleagues have indicated, this study lacks comprehension. It has not been properly funded by the ministry for a long enough period of time. It looks only at the secondary level and, as we state in our first report to the ministry, for us, the dropout problem begins before high school. It is, in a sense, too late at that point, yet we are looking at the secondary school level. I think we have to have some really comprehensive longitudinal studies. One of the things that we find lacking, as my colleague indicated, is that we cannot even get from the school boards the composition of the native population in any school or district.

Of course, the old excuse was, "We cannot collect data because it is against human rights." That is a great crutch to prevent the accurate collection of data which could be useful in designing, implementing and evaluating programs that could benefit the native population and, I think, the whole population. If the native population benefits from education, then this province's level of economic development is raised considerably. People are off welfare and substance abuse, etc. I think we will all profit from it.

That is my summary of our position at this time in terms of the dropout problem. Its scope is inadequate, its methodology is inadequate, resources are inadequate, and we are doing the best we can, given the limited resources.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: When is it due to end?

Mr. Weaver: In mid-December.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I will defer, even though I have lots of questions. I know there are other people who want in.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. We have Mr. Keyes, Mr. Villeneuve and Mr. Mahoney.

Mr. Keyes: I just want to follow up a bit on Mr. Johnston's question first: that is, your relationship within the ministry. As I understand it, within the ministry, there has been a department that has been responsible for some of the work in native studies. I do not know whether Mrs. O'Neill wants to comment on it or not.

I remember that for some time—it was about 10 years ago—they seemed to be doing a fair amount in curriculum production to make people much more aware of the role of natives in our heritage and so on. I am just wondering whether you have a connection with that department in the ministry yet or whether it has ceased. Were you involved with it 10 years ago? Charles, I do not know whether you or Harold has the answer to that. I want to get an evaluation in my mind as to how

you now see the role they played some years ago. Was it stronger than it is today?

Mr. Wetelainen: In the history of our association—I can only speak from our association's involvement with the Ministry of Education—we were funded at a level for the first few years and we played a role. About five years ago, the funding to our association was cut off by the Ministry of Education. We were getting \$35,000 a year to employ one person to really respond on a province-wide basis.

That funding was cut off for three years. We kept hammering at the door asking for somebody to respond on the issues. We knew there was a crying need within the community and a crying need within our association to have some type of expert on staff to respond in curriculum development and a lot of the areas. The liaison between the ministry and ourselves is very technically oriented.

They held us off. They said that we had provided poor accounting a number of years ago. They said we did not bring them updated accounting and that type of thing. I was not with the association; none of us were. We kept saying that we have been a different association from the time we got in, and we asked for that funding to be reinstated. They then reinstated it. They said, "The \$35,000 was always set aside for your association." We never did receive it.

Finally, on the dropout study, we said: "Look, you have no native participation in this study. We are not going to participate in this study. We are going to come back after you finished it and say that the study is garbage because we never participated it." We are still going to say it. They then coughed up some money for us to participate in the study. I guess it is just a way they can rubber-stamp it again. They gave us enough to get by. That is our participation with the Ministry of Education.

1040

Mr. Recollet: Olaf wants to comment also.

Mr. Keyes: Thanks, Olaf.

Mr. Bjornaa: I felt too that they had no intention of giving us any funds whatsoever. The \$35,000, like he said, was cut right off. The \$35,000 looked after the whole of Ontario, for a native dropout study or you name anything. Right now, our study is worth \$70,000, which they gave us. If we want to write a letter to every one of our members, it buys us the stamps, letters and envelopes. We could not afford it. We could not afford to write to every one of our members with \$70,000, to do a proper dropout study with

one person for the whole of Ontario. They picked a few select areas.

I can go on here all day about stuff like the busing of children. You can go to the schools and the schools will say, "We have no record of who is Metis and who is nonstatus in any school." When the bus comes driving in, they say, "There's the Indian bus." Quite well they know it. Yet they seldom say, "There's the white bus coming in." They know it right offhand, like that. To me, I really feel, like Mr. Weaver said, our time limit is very short to do a proper dropout study. The funds are insufficient.

They are going to come back here or to the Ministry of Education having played a very small part in here. They are going to go back to the minister and state, "Here, we played a part in that;" the wheel has been invented. We are not going to reinvent the wheel, but there are places where the spokes have to be changed and we have to be there. Until this happens, our jails are going to keep being full and rubbing alcohol is going to keep being offered there. Our children, like we say, are stripped of their native language. There is no place for them to go any more.

Mr. Weaver: Mr. Keyes, no, we have not been asked to participate in this new curriculum development project that has been going on in the ministry. We are aware that it is going on, and it is going on within the same unit where our contacts are—the Centre for Secondary and Adult Education—but we have not been asked.

Second is the area of curriculum materials, a very important area. There is a guideline in the ministry for locally produced materials. We have not been involved in that. Third is the area of professional development, which to me is where the action is. If we are going to have changes in pedagogy, it is going to have to be at the preservice and in-service levels.

There is no way for us to make input now through the Ministry of Colleges and Universities to the in-service/preservice training programs. That is why we are asking that anybody—and we already have a guideline in some states in the United States. If people are going to teach in those states, they have to show that they have mastered an aspect of dealing with other cultures. We are asking that Ontario take that major step as a prerequisite for getting a licence in Ontario. This would put Ontario in the vanguard. Is my suggestion, what I am saying, clear?

Mr. Keyes: It is clear. I am just not quite prepared yet to accept it, on the basis that if you want to apply that, we would then say the same thing—since we are on the verge of being a

bilingual province—we would then also say that every teacher had to have competency in bilingualism, and that would wipe out the majority of existing teachers, including myself. I can appreciate the philosophy behind what you want, but there is something more important to me.

I was glad to hear Mr. Recollet relate the whole issue of education to self-government because I believe that is a very critical aspect. Self-government will not be attained until you do have the opportunity, through the educational system, of educating your native people in their rights, their heritage and developing that value of self-worth so that they participate to the extent—but I think the way you have to go about is starting slightly differently, and you have not mentioned it here.

Maybe it is because it is too mundane; that is, if you really want something to change, it has to change internally. Therefore, you really have to work at getting someone—a number of people—from the Metis and allied association to become an employee within the ministry on a full-time basis because that is the way change comes, from within, when you are talking about curriculum work, dropout work and the rest of them, rather than going out to consult with them. It is the same thing, frankly, that happened within government in promotion of French as a second language; we have acquired and hired a large number of French-speaking people.

I think that is where the association should be trying to put some emphasis, to be sure that there are many qualified people in your association who would make admirable employees. That is where change starts to happen, in my opinion: within. I think everything you have said in the brief certainly concerns the goals you have brought forward, but I guess we are trying to zero in—and I wonder, Charles, if you could focus on this—on what would be the priority issue. I did not sense the priority as to which would come first. As we work towards a goal, let us state our priorities and have an idea of which one we will attempt first, then build to the next. Have you give any thought among your team to see what is the priority? I did not sense it there.

Mr. Recollet: Yes. If you refer back to the area of the community education advocates, you could field that as a starting point, if you want full participation from our association. From there, we can escalate right up to any kind of select committee. Once we do the real grass-roots study and have our people participate to a full extent, and talk to our people along the lines that they can

understand, I think they can relate a little more easily with us. They have been affiliated with our association over the past number of years and I think they are waiting for a change, something to happen.

Mr. Keyes: Would you make a comment on the whole idea of someone working from within the ministry, and then I can pass on to someone else?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Who gets co-opted, the ministry or the person?

Mr. Recollet: If we could start off in this area here, that is just one component. As far as getting people put into place is concerned, we could probably have talented and resourceful people or people with expertise in the educational field. We prefer to have the individual a native person, to start off with, but we would have to give it some thought. If you are offering us a position in the ministry from within our association, then fine, but give us some time to do some research on it.

Mr. Weaver: In the interest of making things brief and manageable, we have a very important recommendation that both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities institute immediately an affirmative action policy. I think the current one aimed at females has been very successful. All you have to do is walk through the ministry and see, but we would like to see the affirmative action policy extended beyond gender to first nations people. That is a recommendation that we originally had on our list.

Mr. Keyes: That is the type that I think can work. Change comes slowly, but it comes from within in that way, as the people are there and in position.

Madam Chairman: Just before we go to Mr. Villeneuve, Mr. Mahoney had a supplementary on one of Mr. Keyes's previous questions.

Mr. Mahoney: It was just a point of clarification, actually. I read on page 10 you have asked that compulsory training in native studies be a prerequisite for receiving an Ontario teaching licence, but I heard you say in response to Mr. Keyes that one should have a basis in all cultures before receiving a teaching licence. I see a little difference there, a bit of a contradiction. Are you being specific to native culture or are you saying people should have a basis in all cultures as part of their Ontario teaching certificate program?

Mr. Weaver: We have stated clearly here that we feel they should have compulsory training in

native studies. The model that has been developed in the United States is that people receive training in all cultures, especially those disadvantaged economically and historically, those who have been abused throughout history, but our recommendation here is in the area of the natives specifically.

Mr. Mahoney: Only. You are not saying it should be like the American model.

Mr. Weaver: I am not making that recommendation.

Mr. Wetelainen: I think they can speak for themselves.

Mr. Mahoney: They can, but I am interested in the perspective that we too have a multicultural society and that someone receiving a certificate should have a basis in all cultures and in all aspects of Canadian society, of which native culture would be one.

Mr. Recollet: We understand that Canada is a melting pot for people from all the world, but we are speaking of our first inhabitants, first peoples of this province, as I mentioned, Ontario, and this country of Canada.

I have travelled as far as Australia, New Zealand, South America and other regions where aboriginal people are losing their identity, losing their language and culture, some of them are under suppression by various forces in the world, and I do not think the aboriginal people should be subject to those kinds of suppressions here in Canada, even in Ontario.

Let us face it, a lot of our premiers are not from Ontario, possibly not from other parts of Canada, even. They admit they are immigrant premiers or immigrant prime ministers right now, but what about getting someone from Canada, one of the first inhabitants up here, and being proud of who the aboriginal people are here in Ontario and across Canada? A good step was taken by the Northwest Territories or the Yukon Territory when they said the aboriginal language should be compulsory. That is a good step for Ontario to be taking also. If they can do it up north, they can do it here.

1050

Mr. Villeneuve: Thank you, gentlemen, for your presentation. I find a fascinating statement at the top of page 3 and I would like you to expand on it. Your students "are forced to abandon Ontario to go to the United States to receive equal right to education." What does that mean?

Mr. Recollet: That comes to us through consultation with a lot of our grass-roots people,

our local presidents and our boards of directors. As I mentioned, we have approximately 150 grass-roots communities which we represent politically; they are affiliated with us. In that statement, we mean people in Toronto, Sault Ste. Marie, where our head office is, Thunder Bay, all along the border of the United States and Canada; we feel a lot of people have to leave this province and other provinces to go into the states to get a better education because they are not getting an education here in Ontario.

Mr. Villeneuve: The word "right" is used. Rights are rights. Do you feel that we are not meeting what you feel are your basic rights with what is in place now?

Mr. Wetelainen: Maybe I can just relate one incident in my family which involved one school board system. In my family, I look a lot fairer than my sister and my brothers. I went through the same school system. The racism that she felt when she went through was totally different than what I had felt. It was different. When she went in one particular class, they made a comment about filthy Indians. It was directed right towards her by the teacher there.

She went down to the principal. The principal said, "No, no teacher of mine would ever make that statement." There were witnesses. She got a detention and she was told by the principal, "If you ever make a statement like that to me again, you will not be at this school any more." She dropped out of school then.

Mr. Villeneuve: Peer pressure is probably what you are speaking of here, as opposed to possibly the system itself, and I guess the system prepares the peers for what happens.

Mr. Wetelainen: We know of kids who have gone from northwestern Ontario down to Minnesota. One parent would move there. They went to the little red schoolhouse there. They were doing very poorly in this system. There was a more equal opportunity down there for them to go through. It was a better system for them to participate in education.

Mr. Villeneuve: You are telling me less sophistication is possibly better. I think that is what you have just said.

Mr. Weaver: No, I do not think that is what he said.

Mr. Wetelainen: I said they got a better opportunity for education there.

Mr. Bjornaa: May I pinpoint an example? Sault Ste. Marie area is a border line. I have had two first cousins who went to school in the United States. The two were darker. The third

girl was fairer. She went to school on this side and she had no problem. When her two sisters came up into the system, it seemed that that they became the objects of remarks in the school. These other two children got them; she didn't get them. My aunt pulled the two girls out of school and sent them to the United States to finish up their education. They came out with very, very high marks; very good results. This happens all over and it is a thing that is known.

In Batchawana Bay, an exceptional native child, with just two years in school, jumped grades because he was so far advanced. He was only 11 years old and he was small for his age. They would not bus him with the high school kids into the city to upgrade himself. The school principal held him back. Finally, his father said: "I am going to have to send him to another school. I am going to have to do something." Until pressure was put on this school in the Batchawana area, this child was getting nowhere. They held him back. My aunt saw the same thing happen with her two kids specifically.

Mr. Villeneuve: So you are seeing cultural segregation. You are seeing some degree of elitism in the system.

Mr. Bjornaa: Right now, in the Sault Ste. Marie area, parents have pulled their little girl out of school because of discrimination; pulled her right out. It is happening every day. It is not something that is brand-new.

Mr. Weaver: I would like to reinforce that statement. I do not think it is an understatement. I think when we make the statement that native youth from Ontario are forced to abandon Ontario to go to the United States to receive an equal right to education, what we are referring to here are equality rights under the Canadian Human Rights Code. I think one of the major institutional expressions of this denial of equal right is the streaming system. We will talk about that in our presentation in September.

Let me give you a dramatic example from the Ministry of Education itself at this point, from one of the regional offices. There is a native lady who was assigned to the basic stream. Once you get in a stream, it is very difficult to get out of that stream. As you know, once you go through basic, you are not entitled to post-secondary education, certainly not university. She had to go to the United States to get a bachelor of arts degree and, subsequently, a master's degree. She came back into Ontario and is now employed by the ministry. To me, that is a dramatic example that backs up, qualitatively at least, our position.

Mr. Villeneuve: That is a very dramatic example. As someone mentioned a while ago, let's not reinvent the wheel. You mentioned Quebec, Saskatchewan and Manitoba as having far superior systems to what we have.

Could you suggest maybe one or two of the main areas that we, as a committee looking for a different philosophy and different goals, should explore in our sister provinces?

Mr. Bjornaa: I think Charles said a key thing earlier. For us to explore it with our people, we have to have somebody in our five zones specifically. It cannot be a Band-Aid thing, such as the Ministry of Education's giving us \$35,000 to look after the whole of Ontario. This is an insult to our people. Each time, they keep telling us they need this or they need that from us. Furthermore, they keep lumping us in with other user groups. We are the political organization, recognizing the Constitution, to look after these native children and that is what we are here to do.

Mr. Weaver: I would like to add to that. If you want some concrete examples, I would like to suggest the following. You can start with Quebec, where there are two independent, self-governing native school boards. You may start right there.

You may go to Manitoba and look at the same situation; or you may go to Saskatchewan where there is, in fact, a native college attached to the university, an independent native college; and there is also an independent native research institute, which is what we are recommending in terms of an institute of research on aboriginal society and culture.

Those are concrete examples you might want to take a look at outside of Ontario, because I think you would have difficulty finding them in Ontario.

Mr. Villeneuve: These are indeed funded by the provincial government as opposed to the federal government?

Mr. Weaver: That is correct. These are provincially funded operations. You see, one of the things we have also accused this province of is not matching the dollars from the feds, as the other provinces are doing. That is a major step this province can take at this point in its history.

Mr. Jackson: What dollars are we talking about, to be specific?

Mr. Weaver: Dollars for education.

Mr. Jackson: Post-secondary?

Mr. Weaver: All levels.

Mr. Jackson: OK, very good. I knew of the post-secondary. I was not aware of the extent of

the elementary and secondary dollars that were specifically targeted for Metis-aboriginal programs.

Mr. Wetelainen: I guess what Harold is referring to, also, is that we represent a large proportion of the Bill C-31 Indians who reside off the reserve; who basically, as you know, are a federal responsibility, but they are not tied to a band.

Where are these people? Where are they being funded? Where is the money being channelled? Is it being channelled for their benefit or is it being channelled somewhere else? That is what we are saying on that. We have a large population who are not residing on the reserve and do not choose to reside on the reserve. You have to make the clear distinction.

Mr. Jackson: Are you saying that these are not matched dollars or that the dollars are transferred and you do not know where they are being spent?

Mr. Wetelainen: Exactly. If the dollars are, in fact, being transferred; if they have recognized that under Bill C-31 there are—how many, 70,000 applicants?

Mr. Recollet: There are probably 70,000.

1100

Mr. Wetelainen: There are 70,000 applicants, or similar to that, who are in the federal system. Basically, you know and I know how much money they put in from the federal side, that they contribute to the status Indian side. These applicants are coming into the system. They have to be transferred somewhere. The dollars are going to have to be accounted for. Our people are accessing the type of funding for higher education now. That is the biggest reason our people want their status back, so that they have some way of funding higher education. They are accessing those types of dollars, but there is a whole population being denied status under Bill C-31 that still needs some type of funding for higher education.

Mr. Villeneuve: I will relinquish, because of time, but I certainly look forward to your presentation in the fall. I think the more we talk about this the more intriguing it becomes. I think we really have to look deeply into this particular subject where our native people have to go to the United States to be treated equally. That is very critical.

Mr. Wetelainen: It is a sad statement.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. We will have a final supplementary from Mr. Reycraft on that same line of questioning.

Mr. Reycraft: I too am interested in native young people who are leaving Ontario to go to the United States to get, to quote your brief, "an equal right to education."

I am trying to identify what it is that the American system, or that in other provinces in Canada offer, that the Ontario system, does not. You talked about kids being discriminated against and about racism in some of the schools, but you are short on specifics as far as what is being offered in American schools that is not offered here in the Ontario schools.

Can you help me out any further with information about that?

Mr. Bjornaa: For one thing, you will find that the school boards in the United States, when our children go over there, have not got a lot of the white bureaucracy that is on this side and that knows some of our children.

Let's face it, in a small community it is specifically known who is going to get the high marks and who is not. It is going like clockwork. I come from a small community, so I know that. I can tell you, almost like clockwork, in the Batchawana school I used for an example I know who is going to come up with the high marks this year, who is going to come up with this and who is going to come up with that.

Mr. Reycraft: How do you know that?

Mr. Bjornaa: I have to look at a school board. I look at the system. I look at who is related to whom. That is the way our cards are tabled. I look at who is related to whom. I have been around that system for many years. When you go into the states, you do not have to—

Mr. Reycraft: Are you suggesting the marks that kids are given in the schools depend on who they are related to?

Mr. Bjornaa: That is correct. I am specifically stating it very clearly. It is known in small communities. I can go up to Armstrong specifically and I can talk to a few of the native people. I can say, "Who do you think is going to be the chosen student this year?" They will say, "Oh, I know exactly who it is going to be." Yet our child was kicked off the bus, and this happened and that happened. It is there. The school board told me specifically, because I came from a small community and I spoke up for the native kids they said: "Oh, if you live half way, nobody has to know you are native; your kid can go to school here. Nobody has to know you're a native; you live half way."

Mr. Weaver: May I just add to that? There is an abundant amount of research which shows

that school marks are based, to a large extent, on the aesthetic appreciation of the student by the teacher. If a teacher does not like the way a student dresses, or the colour of his skin or the features, the hair, etc., that will have a great impact on the marks the student gets, especially in the early levels. That may sound bizarre, but it is a reality.

Mr. Reycraft: I was a schoolteacher in this province for 23 years and I agree, your comments sound bizarre. I know that evaluating kids is somewhat of a subjective process, but I think you are carrying it to an extreme.

Let me ask another question, if I may. People in this province and this country who feel that they have been discriminated against because of their race have recourse to mechanisms and to systems to help to address those injustices. Has any attempt ever been made to appeal to, for example, the Ontario Human Rights Commission relative to some of the complaints that you have made here?

Mr. Recollet: We have been talking about rules, procedures and systems for basically the past 100 years. We are still having people occupying our land. Why should we start going to human rights now?

Mr. Wetelainen: Do you not think an 80 per cent dropout rate tells you something; that your system is not working, that there is something—

Mr. Reycraft: I agree we would all like to have a system where nobody ever has to go to a human rights commissioner to get equal treatment under the law, but we do not have that kind of a society yet in this province and I think we are a long way from getting it. That commission is there for very good reason, to protect people against unfair discrimination, and it is there for all people in this province to use, regardless of their race.

Mr. Bjornaa: When you say that you have the human rights commission, I agree. I could name off some families, believe me, whose human rights thing should have gone through. Both parents are getting old now. They do not speak English really that well. They do not have the money to come in. Even if they went to the school principal and they spoke up for their kids, the principal would use words and stuff, and the parents do not even know what it means. So they walk out of there. They say, "What's the sense of us going?"

Simply, we talk about the native people who have worked in the system, but they did not know the labour board was there to go to in a dispute

because they were cheated. In our school system, our kids are being taught that from this high.

You say you have been a teacher for how many years?

Mr. Reycraft: For 23.

Mr. Bjornaa: Have you taught in small schools and small areas where there has been a lot of native input?

Mr. Reycraft: Yes.

Mr. Bjornaa: How many parents can you really say you spoke to and you looked at and you said: "Well, look, this is a human rights issue. Go to it"? How often have you done that?

Mr. Reycraft: My experience in trying to talk to parents is that it was always difficult to get the ones I really wanted to talk to to come to the schools or to talk to me if I tried to go to them.

Mr. Bjornaa: That is correct, and that is why a lot of these parents do not even know what the human rights thing means. There are a lot of them who do not.

I had a grandson who started school. When he started kindergarten, he had to leave at seven o'clock in the morning to leave for school. When he got home in the evening, it was between five and six. If the weather was good in the wintertime he got home at five o'clock. The average working man works 40 hours. These kids have already been 10 or 11 hours on the road, and yet he had homework to do at home. This system is not working.

Mr. Recollet: Mr. Reycraft, just in response to your question, as our second vice-president mentioned earlier, for some reason we are sitting here talking to this select committee on education and various members of this committee continue to lump us into other user groups or the multicultural melting pot. At the same time, in our presentation—you heard our presentation—we pointed out we are one of the first peoples who inhabited this province and the country of Canada.

In other words, right in this committee right now, in talking to you or listening to you, I feel we are going to make very slow progress. You just say, "What about what happened in the past?" We are trying to correct the past. The past did not work. Today does not work. Let's improve the future. That is why we are here today.

Do you not think our parents went to your psychiatrists, went to your human rights officers, your race relations officers? Where did it get them, if they still have to go back to the rural communities and there are no jobs?

Mr. Reycraft: If I had known the answer—

Mr. Recollet: They are jobless, and they try to learn the hunting, fishing and trapping skills of their forefathers.

Mr. Reycraft: I hear what you are saying. I am trying to ascertain why the system is not working to meet the needs of your people.

Mr. Recollet: That is why we are here.

Mr. Reycraft: I need that information. The only way I am going to get it is to ask you to provide it for me.

Mr. Recollet: That is why we are proposing we start off—I think Ken Keyes has asked, “Where do you think we should start off?” We said the education community advocates. Let’s have a starting point and let’s not be shy about getting something done.

If we set out that this could be a starting point, then, as I mentioned, we can escalate into select committees on education, then towards the cabinet committee of the whole and also a cabinet committee on education. I think those would be the appropriate steps to go, and also proper consultation with the people who are being affected by the system, the grass roots in our current and our future generations.

Madam Chairman: Thank you for bringing your very deep and very real concerns before our committee today. I think you have certainly given us a good idea of what direction you feel we should be going in regarding native education, and I do hope your visit here will prove fruitful. Thank you for coming.

Mr. Recollet: Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Just prior to going on to our next delegation, I bring the members’ attention to the fact that our very own Mr. Johnston from Scarborough West has conducted an evaluation in his riding concerning education and he has shared the results with the members today. You might like to go through those results. I think you will find them quite interesting.

1110

Mr. R. F. Johnston: This is a response to a questionnaire I put out last session, on which we have just now had a chance to collate the results. There are interesting attitudinal responses, but most people believe that the system was better in the past than it is today. The longer ago they were educated, the better they think their education was than the present system.

Madam Chairman: We do not know whether it is in fact or in nostalgia that they are looking at that.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: At least, there is an attitudinal expression which is interesting. There are also some fascinating results on the second side around the role of child care in the system. There seems to be a very ambivalent kind of feeling about it. There is very strong support for smaller class size and for open access to universities, which is something I was a little surprised by. If members are interested, we have the ability to correlate a number of these responses; if members want any of it broken down in terms of what the teachers’ attitudes were to teachers, for instance. If you wanted that response from teachers, I would be willing to try to get that stuff out of our computer for you. I just thought you might be interested in sharing it. There was a high response rate, 1,000 people from the riding, with some interesting responses.

Mr. Keyes: There are several good responses. With tongue in cheek, I thought the interesting one, the attitudinal one, is they do not want to come to any meetings on education if they are held.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Yes, but they all want me to mail it to them.

Mr. Keyes: They all want to read it when you have mailed it to them, but they do not want to go to any education meetings.

Madam Chairman: Maybe that says something about the quality of the member in Scarborough West.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The quality of my meetings.

Mr. Mahoney: Who drafted the questionnaire?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: My assistant.

Madam Chairman: We will now hear from the Ontario Separate Schools Trustees’ Association. Please come forward. Perhaps you would be good enough to identify yourselves for the purposes of electronic Hansard and then begin whenever you are ready.

ONTARIO SEPARATE SCHOOL TRUSTEES’ ASSOCIATION

Mr. Gagné: Thank you. My name is Omer Gagné, and I am the president of the Ontario Separate School Trustees’ Association. I am a trustee on the Lambton County Roman Catholic Separate School Board in Sarnia.

I am pleased to introduce my colleagues to you. On my left is Mrs. Catherine Curran, who is a member of the board of directors of the Ontario Separate School Trustees’ Association. She is presently serving as chair of the legislative

planning committee, and it is in that role that she is here today as a representative of the OSSTA. Mrs. Curran is a trustee with the Windsor Roman Catholic Separate School Board. On my right is Ernie Nyitrai, the executive director of our association. On my far left is Rolland Fobert, who is a consultant with our association.

As separate school trustees, we are committed to the cause of Catholic education, and your commitment to the young people of this province is evidenced by your work on this committee during the summer months. We are very pleased to have this opportunity to share some of our concerns with you. It is our intention to comment on the brief and to direct your attention to certain parts of it.

Our association has two major concerns which we believe relate to the work of this committee. We are concerned about curriculum and the directions it might take in this province and we are concerned about teacher qualifications and availability. I shall briefly address our concerns about curriculum. I have asked Mrs. Curran to share with you some of our concerns relative to the teacher issue.

The nature of the curriculum in the schools of Ontario has been the focus of attention for the last 40 years. The Royal Commission on Education in Ontario of the late 1940s; the reorganized program of studies; Robarts's plan of the early 1960s; Living and Learning, the Hall-Dennis report of the late 1960s; the credit system of the early 1970s; the secondary education review project, SERP, of the early 1980s and the Radwanski report of the mid-1980s indicate the efforts directed to arrive at an appropriate philosophy for schools in Ontario.

Each study is evidence of the changes which constantly challenge our society. We believe that Catholic parents choose to send their children to Catholic schools for two reasons: (1) they wish us to provide an environment which teaches their children to love God and their neighbours and (2) they wish us to prepare their children to be an integral part of the community when they leave school.

It is because of the first reason that the curriculum in a Catholic school is different from the curriculum in a public school and it is because of the second reason that the curriculum in a Catholic school is similar to the curriculum in a public school. In a subject like mathematics the differences are very subtle, while in a subject like family studies the differences are significant. If schools existed only to teach mathematics, there would be little need for Catholic schools.

Schools, however, teach social studies, economics, family studies and other subjects, and the courses in these subjects in a Catholic school reflect the Catholic reality.

I share with you two examples to illustrate what we mean. There is a topic in the guideline called "Economics" entitled "Labour and the Economy." One separate school board notes an objective for this topic as follows:

"To examine the church's teaching that labour takes priority over capital, the rights of workers are more important than maximization of profits." The resource used is a statement by the Canadian Catholic bishops entitled *Defending Workers' Rights—A New Frontier*.

Another example is found in the social studies program, primary/junior of a separate school board, which has a unit entitled *The Catholic Community*. One of the objectives is to understand the history of our community, with special emphasis on our parish church.

These are but two examples of curriculum objectives which are possible because of nature of the provincial curriculum guidelines. We are concerned that a shift in emphasis as recommended by the Radwanski report, recommendation 1, will create such a content-oriented curriculum so universal in nature that our Catholic schools will not be able to introduce the Catholic dimension into the program. Thus, our first recommendation:

Ontario Separate School Trustees' Association recommends that the Ministry of Education ensure that the objectives of education continue to be defined to a level of generality which will permit separate school boards to introduce the Catholic dimension into the program of a Catholic school.

Our second recommendation is closely allied to the same concern. We recognize and support the authority of the Minister of Education, who may "issue curriculum guidelines and require that courses of study be developed therefrom"—from the Education Act, section 8.

It has been the practice of the minister to invite teachers and others to serve on curriculum writing and validation teams. I draw your attention to page 4 of our brief and I quote, after the bold part:

It is in this regard that we express our strong conviction that in the preparation of curriculum material by the Ministry of Education, separate school personnel must form a representative part of the writing and validation teams. Theirs will be the responsibility to perform three major functions. Their first function is to share with

others their pedagogical expertise in the design and assessment of the curriculum material. Their second function is to ensure that the curriculum material does not contain elements that are antithetical to the philosophy of Catholic schools, as well as to ensure that there is an opportunity and freedom to teach from a Catholic perspective. Their third function is to ensure that the curriculum maintains a level of generality which permits separate school boards to introduce a Catholic dimension into the local curriculum documents.

1120

We are concerned that the more detailed the curriculum guideline is, the less freedom there is for a separate school board to adapt it to ensure the integration into the curriculum of Catholic faith and life.

Therefore, the Ontario Separate School Trustees' Association recommends that the Ministry of Education ensure there be appropriate representation of separate school personnel on curriculum writing and validation teams.

The credit system was introduced in the secondary schools during the early 1970s. Its advent created a problem with regard to religious education courses, which have always been a part of a Catholic school's system. The consequence of the credit system was a delay in approving a mechanism for credit courses in religious education. Recognition was ultimately given to the grades 9 and 10 courses.

I draw your attention to page 6 of our brief. The policy of the Ministry of Education provides that a diploma credit course is permitted in each of the grades 9 and 10 of Roman Catholic separate schools. This policy was instituted at the time when publicly supported Catholic schools did not go beyond grade 10. Religious education courses are part of the reality of a Catholic secondary school, and credit courses leading to an Ontario Secondary School Diploma are an entrenched part of that reality. The addition of religious education courses for diploma credits in grades 11 and 12 is a logical step and one in keeping with the extension of funding of Catholic schools.

I refer you to recommendation 4 on page 6, that the Ministry of Education revise its policy to permit up to four diploma credits in religious education, ideally one in each of grades 9, 10, 11 and 12.

Now I would like to turn it over to Mrs. Cathy Curran to continue this brief regarding teacher issues.

Mrs. Curran: It is our understanding that the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association suggested an amendment to schedule A of regulation 269 to include religious education. Our association supports the same amendment and places it before you as our recommendation 3 on page 6: That schedule A of regulation 269, Ontario Teachers' Qualifications, Intermediate and Senior Division Options, be amended to include religious education.

The nature of a school is largely determined by its teaching staff. They are the frontline workers. They are the models. In a Catholic school, the teachers must model the Catholic faith, as noted in our brief on page 7 in the middle of the first complete paragraph: The experience of the church and its members is that faith must be lived before it can be taught and seen in practice before it can be learned.

The right of a separate school board to give preference to the employment of Catholic teachers has been supported by tradition, legislation and the courts. Upon the advent of public funding of grades 11 and 12 of the Catholic secondary schools, the Catholic community willingly accepted the employment of redundant non-Catholic public secondary school teachers as a moral responsibility and a matter of justice to ensure that no public secondary school teacher would be laid off as a direct result of the extension of funding. We believe this arrangement is working satisfactorily. However, it does not signal that the Catholic community wishes to relinquish its right to prefer Catholic teachers.

I draw your attention to page 8 of our brief which offers a rationale for our position.

A teacher lacking in faith and religious experience is unlikely to be sensitive to the spiritual nature of the student. Faith cannot be separated from life. The presence of teachers who are not committed Catholics impairs the ability of a school to provide a Catholic education to its students by reducing the opportunities to experience the witness to faith offered by teachers. It would also reduce the opportunities of the student to experience personal relationships with Catholic teachers at those times when the invitation to faith in Jesus Christ is present. It is for those reasons that separate school boards have always preferred to hire committed Catholic teachers.

Recommendation 6 is put forward in the hope that the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward) will repeal section 136-1a of the Education Act.

We also believe that simply being a Catholic does not provide a guarantee of a faith model. We

hope that ultimately it will be possible to provide more appropriate preservice training for the Catholic teacher who will be seeking a teaching position in a Catholic school.

Your attention is drawn to recommendation 5. I refer you to the top of page 9.

The Ontario Separate School Trustees' Association recommends that the schools of education ensure that Catholic teachers who wish to teach in Catholic schools receive during their preservice teacher training an adequate background in theology and a professional orientation which will bring to each discipline a point of view that reflects gospel values in the Catholic tradition.

Finally, it is becoming increasingly evident to many of our boards that there is a developing teacher shortage in Ontario. The Catholic community is most concerned that it may find itself in double jeopardy, an increasing enrolment along with a teacher shortage.

We therefore draw your attention to our recommendation 7: The Ontario Separate School Trustees' Association recommends that the government of Ontario stimulate the faculties of education to increase their student enrolments to ensure the availability of a sufficient number of teachers with appropriate qualifications for employment in Catholic elementary and secondary schools.

Mr. Gagné: This is the end of our formal presentation. We would be pleased to attempt to answer any questions you may have or provide any clarification you may need.

1130

Madam Chairman: Thank you. I appreciate the fact that you did leave sufficient time for questions, or at least we hope sufficient time. We have just over 20 minutes. We have Mr. Johnston, Mr. Reycraft, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Mahoney and Mr. Keyes. There may not be sufficient time, as it turns out, but we will try our best.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Thank you for the presentation. I always appreciate the work of the association that is before our committee, but I have to tell you that what I am going to concentrate on is something which makes me very unhappy, and that is your request for section 136-1a to be repealed.

As past chair of the standing committee on social development that dealt with Bill 30, I just want to take issue with what I consider quite anachronistic, old-fashioned attitudes around the requirements for a teacher, or all teachers as you seem to be making it seem, within your system to allow the Catholicity to be maintained.

For instance, I like very much the notion of the example you used of the use of labour value versus capital value as something that was being taught in one of the schools, which is a different notion of curriculum than we see in our public schools. I agree with you entirely and I think it is a wonderful thing that this can take place.

It has also been my experience that a number of teacher friends in the Catholic system who have leaned that way in terms of the kind of instruction they have tried to give in the system have often run afoul of at least one bishop I can think of here named Ambrozic, who has done his best to expunge those people from the system and to interrupt the work of some of them, especially the religion teachers who have been doing what I think is exemplary work in that area in your system.

I then look at what you are saying in terms of what your ideal Catholic teacher is. He may be somebody who may be liturgically correct in the view of some people or who attends church and has faith in that sense, but may very well be one of the vast majority of your teachers who do not concentrate on the social gospel notions as some of your more progressive teachers do. I really wonder if that is the distinction you want in your system or if it is in fact the other, which is to say that this kind of progressive curriculum about values is more what you are after.

I find it impossible to believe that a system that will clearly have a vast majority of Catholic teachers at all times will be eroded in any way by having people within that system who can provide education to students and perhaps even—Dare I say it? How dangerous can this be?—have a dialectic around ideas that would be quite stimulating to most students, albeit from a minority position within the school system, and that would be nonthreatening in any sense to your system.

I find it very upsetting, frankly, to see you come forward at this time and push in such absolutist terms this notion or definition of how to maintain the Catholicity of the system. It seems to me that it expresses much of the reactive nature of the church, if I may put it that way, and not its progressive nature. I had hoped I would not see such an emphasis on this in your presentation.

It is not a question. It is a statement and I make it as such, especially since I am no longer in the chair and am allowed to express my opinions.

Mr. Mahoney: It does beg an answer, though, does it not?

Mr. Jackson: How did you vote on section 136-1a a year ago?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I did not have to, as you may recall, but my caucus sure did.

That is all I wanted to say.

Mr. Reycraft: Actually, I have a question related to the matter Mr. Johnston raised, so perhaps I could start with it. I have a couple of other things I want to ask about as well.

At the time section 136-1a became part of the Education Act, there was an expression of opinion that the amendment to the act would not stand the test of a constitutional challenge. Has there been any discussion of taking that to the test to see whether or not the restriction is within the provisions of the Constitution?

Mr. Gagné: We have not done that, Mr. Reycraft, no.

Mr. Reycraft: And we have no plans to have plans?

Mr. Gagné: Well, who knows the particular—if you will recall Bill 30, that section 136-1a was for 10 years. We are broaching the subject before the time comes up, and who knows what will happen before or after.

Mr. Reycraft: Having obtained a very conclusive response to that question, I will move on to the other matter I want to ask about, and that is the matter of credits for religious education and the move from the current two, which are provided by the policy of the ministry, to four. Under the provisions of Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, at the present time there are 16 mandatory credits plus, if a student wants to go to university, an additional six Ontario academic courses. Now, if we were to add to that four credits for religious education, that would reduce the number of real options available to students to four in four years if they were fast-tracking their way through. Do you have any concern about that?

Mr. Gagné: I think I would like our executive director to speak to that.

Mr. Nyitrai: Mr. Reycraft, we shied specifically away from discussing whether or not the four credits would be compulsory within the school jurisdiction. That is very deliberate. The request is to permit the separate school boards that are currently involved in offering secondary school programs to have the ability to be able to grant four credits for religious education. The manner in which the school jurisdictions then would do that would be left up to them. Currently, the legislation would permit us only to offer two credits within the regulations that are before us. I

am wondering whether maybe Rolland Fobert might wish to add to that.

Mr. Fobert: I will just add that there is a great concern among the Catholic community with regard to any addition to the mandatory number of credits because we also have French-language Catholic schools and they have even an additional problem in that the French language becomes in those schools a mandatory course along with English. They would end up with virtually their entire diploma program of a mandatory nature.

Our review of the environment out there suggests that schools have responded differently to religious education. Some schools have made it a mandatory condition within the school for two courses, some for three and some for four even though two of them are not credits. It varies.

Mr. Reycraft: Do you have any idea how many schools do not require all students to take at least two religious education credits, the two that are available for credit at the present time; and how many students it might involve? Does anybody know that?

Mr. Gagné: No.

Mrs. Curran: I do not.

Mr. Nyitrai: We know of none that do not require at least two.

Mr. Reycraft: I heard what you said about it being left optional, but I read in your brief and I heard you say then that, "Religious education courses are part of the reality of a Catholic secondary school and credit courses leading to an Ontario secondary school diploma are an entrenched part of that reality." That did not sound very optional when I read it the first time, Mr. Nyitrai, and that is why I asked about the matter. I do not think I have any further questions.

Mr. Jackson: I, too, read the report, and given the mandate of goals and philosophy of education, I had hoped it would have been more student-oriented than teacher-oriented, but given that is the—you have clarified that one naturally supports the other and that would be your rationale. However, given that you have focused extensively on the teacher elements of your system, perhaps I can ask some questions about recommendation 3. What is the status with the ministry of your request to have regulation 269 amended? What is your understanding? How far are you along in your discussions with the government in that area?

1140

Mr. Gagné: We have just submitted a brief to the ministry on that.

Mr. Jackson: You have no feedback or anything?

Mr. Gagné: No.

Mr. Nyitrai: It has recently been submitted and it has been supported by three other Catholic educational organizations: the teachers, the Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association, which is the supervisory officers, and the bishops. The four organizations have requested the same item.

Mr. Jackson: When the English Catholic teachers were before us, I noticed and I was quite concerned about the implications of their request for a quota system of Catholic teachers or supervisory officers within the ministry. I was a little concerned about that. Could you clarify your recommendation? Are you talking about somewhat the same idea if you are talking about, "The government of Ontario stimulate the faculties of education...." It could have said "fund" in order to increase access. I am trying to find out if you mean more than that. "Stimulate" usually means to encourage to go in a policy direction. Are you suggesting that we graduate a few more Catholics than we have been for the Catholic system? How am I to interpret that? Is it just more bodies out there from a general pool to pull from?

Mrs. Curran: I think we referred to the fact that we would hope those courses in the faculties would be available to the Catholics who wish to avail themselves.

Mr. Jackson: Are you talking about recommendation 5, the preservice teacher training?

Mrs. Curran: Yes. You are referring to—I am sorry.

Mr. Jackson: At a faculty of education on their way to obtaining a teacher's certificate, you are suggesting there be some additional program offerings to better assist and preservice a potential separate school teacher. That is what you are suggesting. That is clear in number five. I am asking about number seven where you say to "stimulate the faculties of education to increase their student enrolments to ensure the availability of...." Now, am I to read that quite literally? What are you really saying? "Stimulate...to increase...student enrolments" is what I am reading. I just want to make it clear in my mind.

Mr. Fobert: The intent of this recommendation is simply that somehow some encouragement must be given, either through funding or stimulation or just told, however governments do this, to the faculties of education in this province. We have to have more teachers admitted and

graduating because now our separate school boards are finding difficulty in securing enough qualified teachers to fill certain positions. The belief is that this matter will increasingly become a serious problem as we enter the 1990s.

Mr. Jackson: The Ontario Association of Deans of Education made a rather cogent presentation last week before this committee. We found it extremely interesting. They were identifying needs for numbers; that was clear. They had no comment, as I recall their brief, with respect to being aware of specific needs of particular systems. So my question to you would be, to what extent have you as an association been involved with this group with respect to your recommendation?

Mr. Fobert: We have not made any formal presentation to the deans of the faculties of education. We have indicated this concern to the Minister of Education through one of our briefs to the ministry; not to the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mrs. McLeod) at this time.

Mr. Jackson: The reason I raise this is because it was apparent from the deans' presentation that it was not an issue. This would represent a new dynamic in terms of post-secondary influences with respect to a separate system in Ontario, and that is within the mandate of this committee. We will be talking to the Council of Ontario Universities. We have had about four presentations with respect to post-secondary and we are looking at a continuum, but even during Bill 30 we did not get into the impact on post-secondary. This is one of the few times that I have ever had it raised.

Mr. Gagné: I would like Mr. Nyitrai to comment further.

Mr. Nyitrai: The teacher education program that is currently operating with our association, along with many of the other trustee associations, has been intimately involved with that particular program. We have identified, particularly, one—more than just one, but the one that sticks out the most is the French-as-second-language and French-as-first-language teachers. It is almost impossible for school jurisdictions, regardless of whether they are Catholic schools or non-Catholic schools, to hire a sufficient number of French-as-second-language or French-as-first-language teachers.

We know about five of our separate school boards are currently travelling even as far afield as British Columbia to recruit teachers in that particular discipline. They have virtually denuded some of the faculties of education—Moncton,

New Brunswick, as I understand it—to bring people into Ontario to teach. The ability of our school jurisdiction in Ontario to equate the qualification with another province helps in that regard. As you widen the number of provinces in the equation, or equate the qualifications, that will help you to try to end up with this.

But it is not at all unforeseen that we will be going offshore to recruit teachers into our schools, not only in French-as-second-language but also in some of our other disciplines. These points had been made available to the deans of the faculties of education during the teacher education program. I suspect that we are a little bit surprised that would not yet have come out, or something akin to that.

Mr. Jackson: It did come out with respect to the point you are raising. I appreciate your introducing the fact that it is the notion of qualifications in Ontario and the degree to which that mitigates against candidates coming from other provinces into the Ontario system—I appreciate your sharing that with us, because that was not brought forward by the deans. Theirs was primarily the funding element. You are also talking about external access.

Madam Chairman: We have two people left on our list of questioners, Mr. Mahoney and Mr. Keyes. In the interest of time, perhaps you could keep the questions down.

Mr. Mahoney: Actually, my first question was asked by Mr. Jackson on recommendation 7. I wonder, as a bit of a supplementary, if you might consider suggesting to this committee specific areas to define the words “stimulate the faculties of education.” If you have an opportunity to sort of revisit that recommendation and submit something to us with some specificity, I think it might be helpful.

Mr. Gagné: We will do that.

Mr. Mahoney: I am curious, going back to your opening statement, about the reasons people go to the separate school. You cited two. One was the desire for religious education in Catholicism and the other had to do with the general level of quality of education. Have you conducted a survey that would indicate that those are the two main reasons? Do you have some statistical data to back that up?

Mr. Gagné: We have no statistical data, but that has been going on for many years. That is our feeling, and that is the feeling we get from our people.

Mr. Mahoney: So you have done one informally. The reason I ask is that I have

children in the separate system and the public system. I have talked to a lot of my constituents over the past 10 years as a local politician, and the reason would be a little different, in my view. It would be that there is a perception that there is more discipline in the Catholic school system, more of a hands-on type of leadership or direction that is given and that, right or wrong, the quality of education is, therefore, better. Somewhere down the line, frankly, comes the desire for religious instruction.

I have found that many parents who practise Catholicism will be ensuring that their children get a certain basis in that particular religion, either through church and/or home. To have it supplemented in the school is a benefit but, frankly, I do not put that at the top of the list. There is another reason, and that is location of the school, which is pretty simple.

1150

We have communities where there do not exist public schools and yet there may be two Catholic schools and we have people scrambling to baptize their children so they can get them into the Catholic school system. I do not mean to sound cynical, because that is reality, particularly in the growth communities.

By way of a question, as someone who was educated in the Catholic system, in fact in a Catholic boarding school, and taught by priests and with children who have gone through the system, I experienced teachers who were highly qualified in theology and Catholicism, but not so highly qualified in math, history or other such areas. Would your prime interest in hiring a teacher be in his basis in theology or in math, if that was what you were looking for?

Mrs. Curran: I can share with you. If you were raised in a Catholic boarding school, I was raised in Notre Dame convent in Ottawa. They had boarders.

Mr. Mahoney: You were not a day hop, were you?

Mrs. Curran: Yes, I was a day hop.

Mr. Mahoney: Oh, my goodness.

Mrs. Curran: As far as discipline goes, I think it is now hands-off, as opposed to your phrase of hands-on discipline. I believe we still have excellent discipline but I do not think that is the primary reason. I think our schools are there to reinforce what the Catholic parents at home are teaching, and we like to work hand in hand with our parents, parents being the primary educators. We certainly share with them in that way.

I have six children, who are either in or have been in our systems from Ottawa through to Windsor, and I have found in all those regions that the teaching in Catholic schools has been excellent. Teachers certainly have their strengths and their weaknesses, as do we all, but I think a well-rounded student does come out of our system. Now, with the completion of funding, I am looking forward to an even better, more sophisticated teacher.

Mr. Gagné: Before you go to Mr. Mahoney, I would like Mr. Nyitrai to comment further on that, please.

Mr. Nyitrai: With regard to your comments relative to the qualifications of teachers that may currently be in our system, I suspect that the numbers of those who may have had the kind of qualifications I believe you and I may have enjoyed in Catholic schools—I suspect we are about the same age—

Mr. Mahoney: No comment.

Mr. Nyitrai: —are much less. At least those with those kinds of qualifications are close to being so few in number as to almost become insignificant.

With regard to the qualifications of all the teachers coming into our system currently, every one of our separate school boards ensures that they have qualified, both in the pedagogical discipline that they may be teaching in and, from our perspective within a Catholic school, also to bring with it those issues associated with our faith.

I suspect again too that out of the some 25,000 teachers who are currently in Catholic schools, the numbers who would not be qualified, whom you and I and many have experienced, are so small that we could potentially count them on your hands and mine.

Mr. Mahoney: The important answer there, though, was the order in which—I understand the desire to have a teacher with a basis in the Catholic faith and I understand the learning by examples that you have quoted in your brief and support those principles, but obviously the trend has turned around in the last 20 years, I think is what you are saying, and competency and proficiency in a particular subject level are number one.

Could I ask one final, very quick, question on curriculum? We have heard a lot of people comment on the crowded curriculum, the social issues that are put in. You have not addressed it in your brief, but could you give us a quick response as to how you feel about things like the teaching

of acquired immune deficiency syndrome, the teaching of other family values, social studies—we used to call it family studies. What is your position on that?

Mr. Gagné: I will ask Mr. Fobert to speak on that.

Mr. Fobert: Before I get to that one, I would like to just mention that my last full-time position was as assistant director with the Metropolitan Separate School Board, responsible for the Catholic high schools. There, every attempt was made at all times to ensure that the academic qualifications were there in the teachers hired to work in the schools with us—mathematics teachers or science teachers with proper qualifications.

One of the reasons for recommendation 7 is to ensure that there be such a pool; that a person who is doing the hiring can select from those who are qualified and have a choice. The choices are getting very small at the moment.

My sense of the Ontario separate school trustees, from my work with them, is that yes, they believe there is a place for appropriate responses to the social concerns that you have expressed. They also share at the same time a concern that has been expressed by Mr. Radwanski in his report that only so much can be given to the schools to do. There is this need to somehow close the ends or the schools will be trying to do everything for everybody at all times, which is probably impossible.

Mr. Keyes: I will try to make my question brief. Just for the clarification of Mr. Jackson, recommendation 7 was definitely one that was really directed to the entire role of the faculties of education in providing sufficient teachers throughout the whole system. You are suggesting that there will potentially be a shortage and you are trying to be sure that something is done in order to provide enough teachers for both systems in all the disciplines, in a sense. It was directed in that way, I gather, which is my first point.

Mr. Gagné: That is correct.

Mr. Keyes: Second, just looking at recommendation 5 about the inclusion in the preservice teaching, surely you do not quite expect—and I just want a clarification on what you want—that the year in a teachers' training institute, the final year in essence of a formal education after about 17 years, will create the ultimate Catholic teacher. That is something they have learned from the time they are old enough to comprehend from their parents and the church. It was my

impression that the priest always used to say, "Give me a child at the age of six and he will remain a Catholic for the rest of his life and have those same principles within him."

Mr. Nyitrai: A Jesuit.

Mr. Keyes: A Jesuit. That is true. But that is what is more important. So the aspect of theology should really be something that is introduced into the curriculum of faculties of education perhaps, merely on an optional basis, so that certain people have an option of what they choose to take in a teachers' training institute.

That option would be there as well in the program, but it is not one that is put across to everyone necessarily, the whole business of the concept of theology. Surely when you want Catholic teachers to reflect the Catholic values and virtues, they have to learn that from those many years in the system rather than trying to polish it off in one year. After all, it is a very small segment of the learning scope of any individual. Is it merely on that basis that you might see how it would be implemented?

Mr. Gagné: I would like Mr. Fobert to comment on that, please.

Mr. Fobert: The terminology is specific: schools of education rather than faculties. It was meant to be far more encompassing than simply the faculties, because you are quite right: there is only a certain amount of time in a faculty and a limited possibility within that period of time.

We hope that ultimately there will be some recognition of a young person preparing himself or herself for a position as a teacher in a Catholic school. So through the educational program, he or she prepares for that work, by obtaining courses in theology and other kinds of professional orientation that will lead into a faculty of education, taking whatever is required there, and then into a position as a teacher in a school. In other words, it is not just the final year.

1200

Mr. Keyes: But most universities would have that available to them. When they are going through university, most universities would have the courses in religion that would give them the basis of theology if they wished to take that in preparation.

Mr. Fobert: One of the difficulties is that the faculties of education do not always recognize those courses as appropriate for admission to the faculty. That is part of the problem.

Mr. Keyes: I see. The rest of them seem to be very logical recommendations that grow out of

the completion of funding. I am sure that is what the minister will be addressing.

Madam Chairman: Mrs. Fawcett has asked for a very brief supplementary.

Mrs. Fawcett: Actually, I think you have answered it in regard to Mr. Keyes's question. My daughter just graduated two years ago from the University of Toronto, and I know she took a course for Catholic schools along with that. I just did not understand whether you wanted something different. I understand you do and it is part of the total degree. But it really interests me that you feel some of those courses are not eligible. That really surprises me. I would have to look into that.

Madam Chairman: I would like to thank the Ontario Separate School Trustees' Association for appearing before us today.

Mr. Gagné: Thank you for listening to our concerns. We feel confident that the results of your deliberations will have a positive influence on education in this province.

We would like to leave with you a copy of the document entitled Catholic Education and Separate School Boards in Ontario, published by our completion office, separate schools, which describes clearly our Catholic education systems.

Madam Chairman: Now we have the Council of Ontario Universities, if you could please come forward. I will start by apologizing to you for our late start on this. As you can tell, we have had a lot of stimulating questions this morning and we are certainly looking forward to your presentation. Would you just identify yourselves for the purposes of electronic Hansard.

COUNCIL OF ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES

Dr. Monahan: I am Ed Monahan. I am the executive director of the Council of Ontario Universities. On my left is Grant Clarke, my deputy.

We are pleased to have the opportunity to say a few things to the committee as anchor delegation in the morning session. We may subside quietly, I do not know.

We have a brief brief, which has been circulated to the members of the committee this morning. I would like to speak briefly, to it and provide an opportunity for questions. This is not a profound, comprehensive statement of a philosophy of education. It refers to some significant matters involved in such a philosophy.

Our council, which incidentally represents all the provincially assisted, that is, publicly funded

universities in the province, strongly supports the view that the school should provide equal life chances and full development for each student. As university people, we are primarily, though not exclusively, concerned with university matters. We recognize that problems of unequal participation in university-level education begin quite early. Therefore these comments, while of interest to us as university educators, are directed at the school system below the university level.

We also recognize that it will never be possible for every child to be brought to the same level of achievement. We think, however, that it is essential—"critical" is the term in the brief—that every child be assisted in achieving the highest possible degree—and here we emphasize literacy and numeracy—of which that child is capable. These we judge to be the core skills that will give every child, every student, the best prospect of having equal life chances. In our judgement, these skills should be taught particularly through the basic subjects: language and literature, science, mathematics and the social sciences; core skills, core subjects.

We then identify certain features of the current educational system which, in our judgement, work against the full potential development of these skills and the acquisition of knowledge in these subjects. We identify three. Each involves the curriculum. One may summarize these as an overcrowded curriculum, an unco-ordinated curriculum and a curriculum for which some teachers lack adequate background in the relevant subject they are teaching.

There is a multiplicity of demands on our curriculum and, in our judgement, this militates against proper priority being given to the core subjects.

With respect to lack of co-ordination in the curriculum, in our judgement, more emphasis needs to be given to continuous review of the curriculum as a whole, elementary and secondary, and beyond that, into post-secondary. We appreciate, of course, that is easier said than done. Nevertheless, this is an important matter which, in our judgement, needs greater emphasis.

The third point we mention is described in the second paragraph on page 3 as "insufficient content preparation of teachers." We all know that knowledge is evolving continuously; that teachers continuously need to have their knowledge and pedagogical skills upgraded. In our judgement, at the present time this is a need. It is a need that should be more clearly recognized in the teacher training programs of our faculties of

education, both preservice and in-service, and also recognized by the school boards in their encouragement of their teachers to keep up to date.

All three of these problems need careful thought and remedial action.

In addition—we have been dividing our brief Gaul into three parts—we call attention to three other matters which will, if properly handled, assist in promoting the full development of each student.

First of all, we think there needs to be more emphasis upon language teaching, which we describe here as "language across the curriculum." That simply means that all teachers should be concerned with providing instruction in language, both oral and written, in and through achievement tests accomplish very much. We do not support returning to departmental examinations old style; nevertheless, we would be more pleased if there was some achievement testing in our school systems.

As a specific point, and this has been something we have argued from time to time over the last 10 years, we think it would be useful to have achievement testing in English or français and in mathematics at the end of the secondary school period.

Third and finally, we support development of a provincial curriculum, that is, a common curriculum across the province for all school jurisdictions. We support the development of curriculum guidelines through the Ministry of Education and we think these developments will improve the education of our students.

Finally, and again this is a curricular matter, we support the continuous review of school curricula. It has been the pattern in this province that from time to time, but really quite infrequently, we have a large-scale, massive review of a given curriculum or set of curricula. We get it, like baby bear's bed, just about right, and then we do not do anything with it, even to look at it, for another five, 10 or 15 years.

This does not seem to be the right way to go about this. In our view, continuous review of curricula involving teachers, Ministry of Education specialists and—who knows?—the odd university faculty member in the disciplines involved, would be a good thing.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Dr. Monahan. I commend you for your brief. You indeed did know what the word "brief" means and kept to your word. You have also put your ideas very succinctly. We appreciate that. You

have also left sufficient time for members to ask questions.

Mr. Keyes: I will just turn to one area in the interests of time. The last group that appeared before us complained about teacher training, in a sense, and I thought I would zero in on teacher training, since the universities are charged with that responsibility through their faculties of education.

I wonder if you can answer some of your own questions, the concerns you have about teacher training and the requirements to enter teacher training. We have heard the last group say they believe there should be acceptance of courses in religion, etc., to enter teacher training, and you might comment on that. You are saying that teachers do not have sufficient qualifications in the disciplines they are going to teach. I presume you were referring perhaps more specifically to secondary school teachers than you were to elementary.

I was just wondering if you could then talk some on your relationship with the ministry. Do you feel the qualifications for entering teacher training in our colleges are too controlled by the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Colleges and Universities and not by the Council of Ontario Universities? I would have thought that you people are in one of the best places to make recommendations to see that changes occur in those areas where you have concerns.

I will keep the rest of my comments to that area today.

Dr. Monahan: There are a number of relevant and important questions there. The faculties of education determine the admission requirements into the faculties. The Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, school boards, teachers' federations, etc., have, and rightly so, a lot of comments and suggestions to make. In the last analysis, however, it is the faculties of education themselves that determine their admission requirements. Basically, that is a good thing. At least, we think it is a good thing.

I must confess I was a little surprised to hear the preceding delegation indicate that some faculties of education were rejecting as qualified courses for admission into the faculty certain university courses which have been given credit towards degrees. I would want to examine the details of that statement, but to me it is not correct.

We have an ongoing discussion with our deans of education about this and there is a difference of opinion, of course, but in our view, admission requirements to faculties of education should

emphasize more heavily subject, academic-discipline requirements. I look forward to the results of the current review of teacher education, which will put a bit more emphasis on that, because I think it is desirable.

The point was made in the discussion with the preceding delegation as to how reasonable it is to expect how much to be learned in one year in a consequent B.Ed. program. That seems to me to be valid. If teaching is a lifetime profession, and I take it that it is, you really need continuous upgrading and return for new work. I think that should cover both the academic disciplines and related disciplines which are of interest to different school boards or school systems.

With respect to an upcoming shortage of major proportions of teachers, this is something we are looking at. I think we need more information and a better understanding of the nature of this shortage, the possible duration of it and also the reasons for it. For example, it is clearly the case that there is an acute shortage of teachers of French as a second language. There is equally an acute shortage of persons able to teach in the French language in a range of academic disciplines. It is the case, however, that students are not interested in going into faculties of education and taking those programs. They do not have the right academic background, for a variety of reasons. You just cannot say that faculties of education should increase the number of students taking French as a second language. Qualified students in significant numbers are not available to enter those programs. It is a complicated issue.

Those of us who have been around for a while recognize that about 20 years ago there was perceived to be, and rightly so, a major shortage of teachers, and teacher education institutions went from about 3,000 overall enrolment to about 7,800 overall enrolment in a period of six to eight years. Then there was an enormous oversupply, and faculties of education now enrol about 3,500 students. Maybe that number should go up. It is an important issue to look at.

1220

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I have a number of questions. Some of them are quite large in scope and some are really specific. Maybe we can start with the larger ones. I know you did not want to see this as the ultimate statement on the philosophy of education by any means and you particularly selected some areas, but the committee has to deal, over the next number of years, presumably, with the whole range of issues.

One of the things that interests me with your appearance is in terms of talking about the

continuum of education and the interaction between the various levels of education. You talk a bit about that in terms of curriculum development. I am thinking also, though, in terms of some comments we might get from you today about the interplay between the colleges and the universities and the secondary system and how all that fits.

Perhaps we could start off with an even more general and more difficult question. In your view, in this continuum, what is the role of the university as we come to the end of the century? Is it essentially what it was in the 1960s when we had our major expansion of the university system in Ontario and moved to sort of a new participation rate, or is it going to be substantially different? Are the basic levels of education that we require changing?

I would be interested in hearing some of your comments about where you think the university fits in all of this at this stage.

Dr. Monahan: As a quick preliminary point, we thought we might be back here in your second phase. Therefore, some things we might have said if we were only appearing once we have postponed until later.

As a general answer to your general question, "Has the role of the university changed, or do I think it has changed, or should it change?" essentially, no. That it should be in a position to provide the kind of education that it provides to more people, yes, of course, because the demand for a more highly educated citizenry is clearly there, not simply for economic and social reasons but also for cultural ones.

If you identify, in terms of education with a big E, the responsibilities of universities with respect to teacher education, that has changed. We had normal schools as well as faculties of education 20 years ago. Now the entire responsibility—well, there are exceptions to that, but by and large—resides with the universities. That seems to me to be evolutionary. It is a good thing, but it implies that universities should take that responsibility more seriously.

If I look at what faculties of education are doing, I think they have done better on the preservice education of teachers than on the in-service education of teachers, and that is an area into which their responsibilities should effectively expand.

I also think, but this is a personal opinion, that the integration into the academic community of faculties of education with the other faculties in the university, but particularly the faculties of arts and science, needs to be much improved.

They are still, generally speaking—this is an easy generalization—more on the periphery than they should be, and the needs for that integration to improve are rising. Those are a couple of comments.

On the relation between community colleges and universities, I think there needs to be more co-operation and articulation and co-ordination of an informal kind.

Mr. Clarke: I might just add one thing with respect to the integration between universities and the school system. We have become quite involved in this through our council for the last five years. In fact, we have had a member of staff who is called an OSIS liaison officer, who has been working with the Ministry of Education, the school boards and trustees' associations, the whole range of players in the education world, to try to get better co-operation between the universities and the secondary school system.

We have co-ordinated the participation of a very large number of academics from the universities in the development of the new Ontario Secondary Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions guidelines, particularly the Ontario academic courses. We are continuing that involvement. We are not stopping it just because the curriculum is more or less developed. We are trying to assist with implementation and we are trying generally to keep an ongoing relationship there and an ongoing dialogue between the universities and the school system.

Our increasing involvement in this seems to have been greatly welcomed by the school system, and we are also trying to encourage our own people, as the curriculum changes in the secondary schools, to then look at the interface, to look at their first-year courses, to see where they should be modified as a result of changes in the preparation of students.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I have one other broad question and then I have a couple of particular ones. Do I have time?

Madam Chairman: We have Mr. Jackson and Mrs. O'Neill. Would you mind if they went ahead and then we could come back if there is time at the end?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Yes, let me ask one more then.

Madam Chairman: Do you have one burning one you would like to ask?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Let me ask a couple of the particular ones then—you can just do a listing of the answers for me—but I have one broad

question on access I would like to come back to which I think is begged by your response. Several of them come up in this way.

You talk a lot about achievement testing at the secondary level and you talk a lot about training of teachers at the secondary level. I often wonder what is being done at the post-secondary level in those areas, in terms of judging the standard of the product of our university system versus that of the secondary system. Also, what are the expectations on teaching at the university level these days? It seems to me there has always been a much less formal requirement in terms of teaching capacity at that level than there has been at the earlier levels.

I would be interested in your comments on that and on the one request from the French community, which we have heard several times now, that they feel it is really time we had a unilingual university; that, as stated by other groups, the bilingual university system we have at the moment is aiding assimilation and not abetting it. I think that is the way they have been putting it to us.

Mr. Reycraft: That is one two-part question.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Those are short answers, though, clearly.

Dr. Monahan: On the French-language programming issue, I would not support the establishment of a unilingual degree-granting institution in this province. It seems to me our history and tradition and good things that emerge from that argue against it. I think the problem there, and there is a genuine problem, is inadequate resources devoted to French-language programming in our degree-granting institutions.

With respect to lack of emphasis within the university on good teaching, this is a continuing problem. Again, without wishing to deflect it too much, I think it is the large number of part-time faculty involved in teaching, rather than the importance that individual teachers or faculty members put on teaching, that is an important issue here. In some sense, that is a resource problem too.

With respect to the assessment of learning that goes on among the students in universities, by and large, our institutions are quite conscientious about regularly reviewing their curricula and their academic programs. We have not gone in for what some United States institutions or state jurisdictions are doing now—measuring outputs. In general, my opinion is that we should not be doing that because we do not need to do that.

One of the reasons we do not need to do that is that the overall academic quality of the students when they come is much more homogeneous than is the case in jurisdictions south of the border, where a high school leaving certificate may mean, and I am not saying this pejoratively, a grade 8 level of reading and a grade 6 level in arithmetic or mathematics.

We have our questions about the qualifications of students, but by and large, when students are admitted to university, they have a level of achievement on which we can build. A conspicuous general exception to that would be mature students, but typically, though many of them come with different academic qualifications, their motivation is very high, and that is an enormous asset. A highly motivated, poorly prepared student will probably do quite well.

1230

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Johnston. I am glad you were able to roll so many burning questions into one brief sentence.

Mr. Jackson: I have a lot of questions, as does Mr. Johnston. He has covered some of them.

First of all, let me thank you for the focus of your brief. I think your comments will be very helpful because they are very specific. I am fascinated by some of the insights you provide us with respect to teacher effectiveness and training. I will not dwell on that too much, because we intend to approach that as a specific task of this committee.

However, I am fascinated by the insight you provide on page 3: "The seniority system currently in place virtually guarantees that some students are taught by poorly qualified teachers." As a trustee, even when I was looking at Bette Stephenson's initial discussion paper on the concept of a college of teachers, this concept was not really dealt with at great length. Could you elaborate a little more on that for the committee's benefit?

Mr. Clarke: In referring to this problem, we were not so much trying to engage in a direct assault on the seniority system as to identify a problem, having heard anecdotal things about this. It is not a matter that we have studied in any depth; however, there may well be a problem with the issue of retraining. It is obvious that as enrolments shift around and so on, you have to redeploy a lot of teachers, but we do understand that in many cases they are being put into subjects for which they do not have the required qualifications. Perhaps someone needs to look into the issue of what is being done for retraining of teachers who are being redeployed into new

subject areas. It is not an area where we have expertise in depth, however. We just wanted to flag a concern.

Dr. Monahan: It may mean that our faculties of education and our universities need to put more emphasis on in-service training of teachers so that they can assist in the retraining of teachers who have been shifted from one discipline to another.

Mr. Jackson: I understood what you were conveying, but I was fascinated when you focused in on seniority. Mr. Johnston was pursuing with you the concept of the continuum in education. Although time will prevent our talking about access to post-secondary education, it is a matter which concerns us all. You indicated it was your belief that the role of the university has not changed, but clearly, the perception and expectation of the post-secondary system has changed. That is what we really have to deal with, because we are political people and we react more to the perception than we do the reality. It is unfortunate, but we do.

Walter Pitman was the first presenter before us. He raised some interesting points. He indicated that the area for reform was not in the university setting, in terms of the Premier's Council recommendations; in fact, there was a gap somewhere between university education and secondary school experience. Could you comment a little more on that?

Mr. Johnston raised it. He did not choose to go into it in much detail, but I would like to hear some of your thoughts for the record with respect to our colleges of applied arts and technology and their attempts to redefine their roles. The fact is we do not have a Massachusetts Institute of Technology in this province; we have a redefined polytechnic. I know this is a really broad area, but it is going to be a major area of concern, because the public has come to a perception that we can expect more of post-secondary experience. Perhaps you are being, right or wrong, put to too much expectation.

Dr. Monahan: Well—

Mr. Jackson: It is my burning question and you can answer it generally.

Dr. Monahan: I would say we have not had for 20 years a serious look at the educational requirements of students who complete secondary schooling. We have universities and community colleges, and they are separate post-secondary systems. They have different objectives, are organized differently, etc.

I think it is clearly time that we look at the policy issues involved there. The questions can be identified relatively easily. The right answers or the relevant answers—that is a lot more difficult. It may be that too many people in our society, students and parents, have unrealistic objectives in post-secondary educational terms. They think everybody should go to university, and that is not true. At the same time, maybe there should be more at university, a greater proportion than there is now. Those are questions that really do not permit of one-line, declarative answers.

Mr. Jackson: I realize that. I will close with this. It is interesting, because we are developing or are trying to uncover information about the question, the degree to which our school systems for our own continuum provide equal life opportunities, which you referred to; how the system mitigates against the full and equal opportunity of life chances for poor and underprivileged children in this province.

Although I am going to try not to misinterpret what you said, it is interesting that as our society evolves, hopefully the line at which we as a society say we will provide all and every opportunity should also be evolving. What I am hearing from you clearly is that it has not hit post-secondary education yet, and in fairness, we have had ample evidence, even this morning, that we have a far way to go to get students even to a grade 8 level in this province, as we heard from the Metis and aboriginals in a presentation earlier this morning prior to your arriving.

Dr. Monahan: Well, these are genuine priority issues.

Mr. Jackson: That was an observation on my part. I keep looking for where we, as a society, will be putting this line. For me as a child growing up in this province, where that vision was set for me by my parents and by my own sense of self-esteem, and as to where I see that line moving as I go through adulthood and as a politician, I was interested in your observations—

Dr. Monahan: I have two brief comments. First of all, when you are undertaking to expand educational opportunity to disadvantaged groups in our society, whether they be disadvantaged economically, physically or geographically, you are looking at the need for a large additional expenditure of resources. You can go on a participation rate. You can go from zero to 15 per cent at a certain unit cost. You can go from 15 to 20 per cent at twice. But when you are going from 35 to 50 per cent, the costs are very great; that is obvious.

The other comment I want to make is that it seems to me that in our educational continuum we have not paid enough attention to transferability. People start off in one direction. They have aptitudes that are discovered. They have ideas or motivations that change. It is too tough to move, say, from a community college to a university or from a general program in a secondary school back into—that is an area where I think we need to do a lot of reflecting.

1240

Mr. Jackson: Mr. Pitman indicated that as well.

Mrs. O'Neill: I want to make two comments before my questions. I am very glad you made the statement about the French-as-a-second-language students who are in the universities because I know that all faculties want those students, particularly in certain parts of the province. There are opportunities in certain provinces for them to study many disciplines in the second language, but there are not many students in those programs.

I happen to have gone to one of the universities for what they call their bilingual graduate award event and there were less than 200 in one of the largest universities in this province. They all had employment and most of them were not going into education, it is true. I do not know how to deal with that, because we have been into immersion programs for 20 years in many parts of the province. As you say, it is a very complex issue and I do not think the solution is around the corner in the province unless we go beyond borders.

The other thing I want to commend you on is the liaison officer. I think I have had the opportunity of meeting with this gentleman in person. I think that has been a very good effort. I wish the effort could have been broader. It is a very great demand on one individual. I think the model is there.

You said a little bit as a result of his activities that you did some curriculum review of first-year level courses. You talked about curriculum review at all levels. What is your process for curriculum review at the university level?

Dr. Monahan: Complicated; heavily decentralized; exists basically at the department or certainly at the faculty level; that is, it is the responsibility of each department through its chair and each faculty through its dean to develop the specific machinery for that. That means a variety of modes are used. It is really impossible to generalize.

Mrs. O'Neill: Is it a trend or not, that there be contact with the secondary school that would be preparing the students at that time? That is not the case on an habitual basis.

Dr. Monahan: Well, it is fairly early days yet. This may be an optimistic statement on my part, but I think that as a result of the new Ontario academic courses curricula, we will see over the next several years a thorough review of many first-year university courses, as a result of which the syllabus will change; because in some ways the students coming will be better qualified, will have covered certain material; and because the curriculum at the OAC level is province-wide you will know that if a student has a credit in chemistry or math 1 or math 2 he will have covered this. It is the case that in our cafeteria, some parts of some first-year university courses are a waste of time for individual students because they took that in their secondary school.

Mrs. O'Neill: So this must be under very active discussion at your level at the moment then.

Dr. Monahan: I will say yes, but I will also say that I look forward to it becoming even more active. I would not want to kid you on that.

Mrs. O'Neill: I wondered if you were familiar with our latest attempt in the Ministry of Education on the benchmark reviews, geography being one that has just been completed. We are now going into other areas such as mathematics. This has taken place both at the elementary and secondary schools. In some places it is calling them benchmarks. I do not whether you are aware of this being practised.

Dr. Monahan: I am really not.

Mrs. O'Neill: It is an attempt to do some standardized testing; but more on a sample basis, not pitting school against school or teacher against teacher but being very representative, over 100 samples. This is being done both in French and English across the province. Mr. Lipischak was with me and should be speaking because he is the one who has been—I had the English project and I likely have not expressed it nearly as well as he could. I think you would likely find some great interest. If you would like, I am sure you could receive the first results of that endeavour from the ministry.

Dr. Monahan: I expect Professor Van Fossen is familiar with that, but I confess I am not.

Mrs. O'Neill: So you have had some look at that.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Dr. Monahan and Mr. Clarke. We very much appreciate

your contribution to our committee this morning; I guess by now I should say this afternoon. Thank you for your valuable insight.

Dr. Monahan: We may see you on phase 2.

Madam Chairman: We certainly hope so.
The committee recessed at 12:47 p.m.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The committee resumed at 2:04 p.m. in room 151.

Madam Chairman: I will open this afternoon's session of the select committee on education as we pursue our review of the goals and philosophy of education in Ontario. I would like to welcome the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, which is with us today. I notice that you have a very brief brief. We are looking forward to your words of wisdom. If you would like to identify yourselves for the purpose of electronic Hansard, you can begin whenever you are ready.

ONTARIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mr. Brophsey: Thank you, Madam Chairman. My name is Peter Brophsey and I am president of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce. I am also vice-president, corporate affairs, Xerox Canada, located in Toronto. On my right is Tennys Reid, who is chairman of the chamber's education committee and who is executive director of campus development and public affairs at the Erindale campus of the University of Toronto. Jack Clemens is second on my right. He is vice-chairman of the chamber's education committee and is manager of academic affairs for Imperial Oil Ltd. in Toronto. Finally, Elaine Rehor, who is assistant general manager of the Ontario chamber.

If I might, just a brief reminder that the Ontario Chamber of Commerce represents 60,000 business members across the province who are also members of 150 boards of trade and chambers of commerce in each of the many communities spread from one end of the province to the other, so we feel we speak for the entire business community, representing a cross-section of business people and their employees, large and small companies, family and multinational companies, and Canadian-owned and foreign-owned companies.

As business people, we are not experts on some of the finer points of educational philosophy techniques and methods. Like the students of the province and their parents, our 60,000 members really are among the customers of the education system. We are concerned and will be talking about this in greater detail in a moment, and our brief, which we have left with the clerk, deals with this too.

We are really concerned about employability, and we break this down into the basic life skills of literacy and numeracy, in terms of priority needs

of the business community, and also communication, which goes hand-in-glove with the subjects, questions and imperatives of literacy and numeracy. As employers, we must compete in a worldwide environment. We are vitally interested in standards and in agreeing upon what should be expected from the educational system by parents, by students, by employers and by educators.

I would like to call upon Tennys Reid, who, as I mentioned before, is chairman of our education committee, to elaborate upon those points.

Ms. Reid: Thank you also for the invitation to make a presentation today. From reading your April Hansard, I recognize that you have an enormous task and that you have a lot of groups that want to speak. We will try to address our comments to the philosophy and the fundamental goals, as you outlined, and we will also try to be brief to allow some time for exchange at the end.

As you will see from our written submission—and I do not plan on reiterating all of the details of that—and from what Mr. Brophsey has said, our chamber is 60,000 business people from a broad cross-section of business, and a huge proportion of small business is represented in that. The vast numbers of these members are not only people in business, but also parents of students, and they are products themselves of the system.

As you have already heard, we do not pretend to be experts on the educational philosophy, but through those members, those business people, those parents, those graduates of the Ontario education system, we, as the chamber of commerce, have been able to assemble an understanding of what our expectations of the education system should be.

As you have already heard, the chamber believes that a prime goal of education is employability. Our case is simple, painfully simple in some respects. We believe the school system should have the objective of educating people to be literate and numerate. These skills represent the very foundation of basic life skills—the ability to think, analyse, communicate—and these basic life skills we believe are themselves important to the world of work, in other words, employability.

We also believe that the back-to-basics philosophy is compatible with a desire to develop thinking skills and communications skills. I notice there was some discussion of that in your April 13 meeting, but without the literacy and

associated communications skills, even the most brilliant thoughts would be lost for lack of clarity in their expression.

1410

Graduates who are literate and numerate have a better chance to develop their potential and enjoy satisfying careers and life goals. We are concerned that the school system is currently being asked to do too much. It is being asked to be all things to all people, and we believe this is an unrealistic expectation, given that we are dealing with finite resources. Ontario would be best served if the emphasis on education were on the basics and if we devoted our attention to providing a solid grounding in the primary grades.

We are not here looking for a quick fix to a problem; we are here asking you to consider investing at the primary level. Just as the basic skills we have mentioned, literacy and numeracy, provide the foundation on which to build others, we believe the elementary school level is the foundation for the rest of the education system.

We have adopted a content-centred approach. This is in more than one way, because we are concerned about basic core content which needs to be mastered at the elementary level. Then when we think of the secondary school graduate, we have concerns about the need for a common understanding of what basic material has been mastered by that secondary school graduate.

To give you an example of the way that we know about this concern to our members, this year at the annual convention, the Oshawa chamber's resolution to the convention was based on just that. It wants to understand that a secondary school graduate comes with basic skills and it wants a common understanding by all employers, and parents too, of what that secondary school diploma means in terms of the skills these people have on graduation. Many business are now in the process of having to retest graduates to understand what skills they are bringing into the workplace.

I would like to make a point of saying a couple of things, as in a previous submission to, not this committee, but the minister. We want to be on record as stating that we believe Ontario has dedicated professionals in its teachers, administrators and support staff. What we question is the ability of these people to fulfil unrealistic expectations. There are also many initiatives in progress which are attacking the problem of literacy, including initiatives from the Ministry of Skills Development. We are aware of those.

The chamber itself—and I will leave two copies of this booklet with the clerk of the committee—has broad interaction with the secondary school population in particular and with the school system in general. The booklets I will leave with you give highlights of the kinds of projects that are ongoing across the province.

We still have a problem that exists in different degrees at different levels. What is constant is the increasing importance that we place on literacy. I believe this is also cited in the submission that you have in front of you. According to the study by the Ministry of Skills Development, the average blue-collar worker now spends about 97 minutes a day reading job-related material. At the very basic level, the skill of literacy is a basic life skill. It could be terribly important to that person's health and safety on the job. At another level, employers find themselves in the business of offering remedial courses in, essentially, composition, training graduates of various levels of our secondary and post-secondary education system to write comprehensible memos.

I do not want to go on too long, so I will conclude by saying I think we are all aware of the importance of a well-educated and skilled population in our increasingly knowledge-based economy. While I have talked primarily about two issues, and I touched on a few others, our message really is simple. We recommend that you pursue a content-centred philosophy and focus on producing graduates who are literate and numerate.

We also encourage the province to put an emphasis on a good solid grounding at the early grades, as we believe that the elementary grades are in fact a critical base on which to build. If we concentrate on achieving a basic proficiency in these two skills in the early years, then we believe that the students' opportunity for success in work and in life in general will be that much greater.

When I was reading your Hansard report of the April meeting—and I can appreciate the volume of material you are going to be receiving—I thought, if I had to condense this into two statements, what would the chamber want to leave with you? The two statements are: Build from the bottom and build in the basics. I would like to leave copies of that as an overleaf to what has already been submitted to the clerk.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Reid. Does this conclude the formal part of your presentation, or are the other members going to participate?

Ms. Reid: It concludes the formal part of the presentation. The only thing I might add is that we would be happy, as the chamber, not only in this forum but also outside of this forum, to participate in whatever meetings or committees to which we can be of assistance.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. We appreciate the very concise way in which you presented your information. I know we have some questioners who are eager to get the benefits of your philosophy. We have Mr. Keyes, Mr. Cooke and Mr. Mahoney.

Mr. Keyes: I was wondering whether you might comment further on the role you see for business and industry in the whole retraining program of people. I expand to definitely including industry here. We were pleased yesterday to hear the presentation from the Kingston Area School to Employment Council, which cited the resolutions passed by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce supporting the matching of high schools to different aspects of business and industry. You did take that on as a fairly involved type of project for the chamber, and I appreciate that.

I want to just expand beyond that a bit, though, to look at the role that you see for business and industry, since the training has to be a continuous and ongoing one. Some employers quite often say, "Give us the individual who does have communication and literacy skills and then we will go from there to train him in the things we want," but as I quickly scanned this, I do not think I saw any reference to the ongoing basis in there. I know you did say they sometimes have to retest them as they come in. Where do you see their role?

Ms. Reid: I would like to make an initial comment on that, and then I will ask Mr. Brophrey and Mr. Clemens and Ms. Rehor if they would like to add to what I have to say.

First of all, we are in a situation where we have a problem. To a certain extent there is a lot of remedial work going on that we would rather not see going on, but it is a problem and we all want to jump in and work on this. We might also want to recognize at this point that some of our members will be better able to work on the problem than others in terms of the size of the corporation. Your owner-operator simply will have trouble being able to afford time or be able to invest in any kind of resources to help with the problem. That applies to a huge number of businesses in Ontario.

On the positive side, I would like to cite one company, and I can leave the article with you, if

you are interested. Budd Canada in Kitchener-Waterloo has put together a program for its employees to assist them in working towards their grade 12 diploma. This was cited in the August Canadian Business magazine, and I think it is a very interesting example of how we can work together on the problem.

Mr. Brophrey: I think too that the Premier's Council studied that very question of retraining. It seems to me there is a joint responsibility here for industry, for government, probably largely through the Ministry of Skills Development, and probably the labour organizations as well, to work together in a system that will recognize the need and do something about the need for retraining.

Retraining, though, seems to me to be mainly of those workers who have reached middle life. Although with the rate of technological change we will probably find—I have read studies that say perhaps every five to 10 years we will be changing our jobs and changing our job content and the skill requirements. I think this is something that the Premier's Council has recognized and it has come up with some excellent recommendations for further study, as I recall, which we are very anxious to work with.

1420

I endorse the statements made by Ms. Reid, that the really difficult part is for small and medium-sized businesses to step up to that problem of retraining. They do not have the resources, and sometimes not the funding. That is where I think we are going to have to work together.

Mr. Clemens, have you anything to add to that?

Mr. Clemens: The only thing I would add is that among my other interests, I have been on the board of governors of Seneca College for six years and I am very much aware of what is going on in training and retraining through the college system. I think that is an excellent vehicle.

In the industry I come from we have always had to train and retrain, because the technology is moving ahead. I think what we are seeing in many industries today is almost a giant leap. They are going to have to retrain. Perhaps from here on in, it will be in smaller portions rather than a major leap, but I think for the institutions out there today, part of the problem is helping them up, making them aware of what is really there and the help that is available to them. The colleges have many people in consulting roles today whom they can consult with to design

training. So I think some of the resources are there.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I have a couple of questions carrying on from Mr. Keyes's questions. What would the chamber's position or recommendation be in the area of retraining or apprenticeship training? I am sure you would agree that it has been very difficult to encourage many companies to get involved in training. They cite the cost as being one of the problems.

Back in my home community, many of the small auto parts companies do participate in training only to see their efforts, not wasted but not fully rewarded, when the bigger companies take their trained personnel because they pay higher wages. Somebody expends the money on training and the large companies reap the benefits.

Does the chamber address this issue? In particular, I am sure you have studied the systems they have in Europe, where there are rewards for training and there are taxes or penalties for lack of training. What is your position or recommendation in that area?

Ms. Reid: We have in the past two years looked at the bilateral study that has taken place and is still ongoing on apprenticeship between the province and the federal government. Probably what came out of our discussions about the apprenticeship program there—this is not related to the economic side of it, but in terms of the education systems—was that one of the big problems was that the schools do not know what the resources are out there in the apprenticeship program. There is no central registry for them to be able to point students in the right direction. At least, if there is, they are not aware of it.

On the economic side, in terms of what has been called poaching by some, I should probably ask Mr. Brophrey and Ms. Rehor if one of our other committees has addressed that. From the education committee's perspective, the material we sent back to the bilateral study is still there and I have not heard about any further developments there.

Mr. Brophrey: You have cited the smaller automotive parts suppliers feeling that the bigger companies were taking people that they had invested funds in. I think the bigger companies will tell you they feel that the smaller companies are poaching.

The answer, it seems to me, is to try to establish some standards. I am not intimately familiar with the European systems, but I have a feeling that some of them might be a little too rigid for the kind of freedom of movement that

we are accustomed to here in North America. I think some standards and uniformity, developed with the co-operation of industry and government, would be helpful.

We train a lot of people in my company. We train them to meet our standards, but our standards are not integrated with the standards throughout the industry. That may be a shortcoming. It may be something that we need to investigate.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: One of the arguments of some people who go through the training system in industry is that because the training is geared to a particular company, it has the effect of restricting mobility and in some ways rewards the company, in that the individual is unable to leave even if there is a better-paying job in another location. I guess if you are going to go beyond the training that the company requires, there is also an argument that can be made that government or society should be involved in the cost of the training too.

Ms. Rehor: Excuse me, Mr. Cooke. If I could just interject, one of the resolutions that our members adopted this year was directly related to apprenticeship programs. I think their great concern is that we are simply not encouraging enough young people to go into apprenticeship and training programs, that we still tend to be a university- or college-oriented society and that we downgrade the very rewarding occupations that are available through apprenticeship schemes.

They made a number of suggestions to address what they perceived as an attitudinal problem. Among those, of course, would be greater publicity for the kinds of work that are available through apprenticeship training and, additionally, that the apprenticeship schemes be looked at to provide broader foundation courses that would be applicable to a family of apprenticeships, and through means like that one, to cause people perhaps not to have to make a specialized choice quite so early through the base educational components. Then the specialized training that would take place within a company situation could also in a sense be shortened and more directed, so that we are not in a position of encouraging more people into courses that will take an exceedingly long period of time for them to master. That is one of the recommendations they felt very strongly about at the convention.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: You still have to find the training positions.

Ms. Rehor: Yes, you do.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: We can have the college programs and we can change attitudes. I certainly think attitudes have changed considerably over the last decade.

Ms. Rehor: I think they have, but I think the other thing that is key is that employers' attitudes are changing as well. Employers recognize that their sort of endless source of employees trained in Europe or other countries is really not available to them now and they are looking themselves towards the kind of in-company training, I think, that we would all want to see.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Let me just ask one other question, in that I think I would share with your presentations the view that we have to emphasize the primary grades. We have certainly talked about that in the Legislature for as long as I have been a member. What practical suggestions do you have as to how we can improve the primary grades?

For example, if you support a substantial decrease in the class size and the pupil-teacher ratio, are you also prepared to join with the rest of the taxpayers in picking up the additional substantial cost?

Ms. Reid: Perhaps the best thing for me to do at this time is to ask Mr. Brophrey to comment on that.

Mr. Brophrey: We think that prioritizing government expenditures is extremely important and that this is a task that government constantly has to be adopting and be aware of. If we were trying to set a list of priorities, we would certainly put education at the primary level, the elementary level, up there as one of the early ones.

We also have been very, very active in urging on all of the Ontario governments for the last 30 or 40 years, I am often reminded, the need to balance our budgets and to be selective in establishing the programs on which we are going to spend funds.

I think on the top of the list of priorities we have to have elementary education, and that may involve reduction of classroom size, but that would probably mean giving up some other expenditures on some other programs somewhere else. We come into a conflict of priorities, one being that we have to educate our young people as a social and economic necessity and the other being that we have to balance the revenues and expenditures of the province, and that means establishing and selecting some priorities so that we spend more here and less somewhere else.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: The difficulty with that is—and I probably could have anticipated your

response, and I do not think your response would be that much different from that of any other taxpayer in the province—if this was the select committee on health, the people appearing before the committee would say that the number one priority is health. If this was the select committee on housing, the people appearing before us would say that the number one priority is housing.

I think we have to accept the fact that if you are going to make substantial changes in a system like the educational system, there are going to be additional costs and you cannot find hundreds of millions of more dollars by subtracting from other ministries; so it has to be paid for out of new revenues.

1430

Mr. Brophrey: Every taxpayer, every corporation and every government in the country is facing that balancing act every day. I just think that is part of the task we have to put ourselves through.

Ms. Reid: Perhaps I could just add one thing on the practical side. Perhaps our suggestion of content-centred at the primary level is a way of improving things without adding costs. As I mentioned before, we are not education theorists, but from what we understand, the early grades right now tend to more of a socialization process. At this point, we think that can happen to a certain extent, but it is terribly important for those children to get the basics of a certain content—literacy and numeracy—in their early years. There is one way in which a change in philosophy may improve the system but not add to the cost.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: If the balancing gets off balance in the primary years, you might never see them in the intermediate or senior years.

Mr. Villeneuve: Thank you very much for your presentation on behalf of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce.

I do not necessarily find it strange that you would say "build from the bottom and build in the basics." I think the educational system was very rigid, went to being very flexible, possibly too flexible, and we are now getting back to some of the realities that our students are facing. What, in your opinion, are the basics that are missing right now?

Ms. Reid: I think we expressed them in our presentation: two key skills, literacy and numeracy. We are not asking the system to be all things to all people, to do too much. We are trying to

focus in on something that is achievable and measurable. Those are the two items.

Mr. Villeneuve: OK. Based on that, streaming has been addressed by a number of people. Whenever we get down to the very basics, where we do have a lot of compulsory subjects, we wind up in some type of streaming. Can you comment on that to some degree, as to where you find some of the people who were possibly in one of the three recognized streams and then wound up in some of the businesses you represent and where the shortcomings were?

Ms. Reid: To deal with the issue of streaming, I think we are really getting into the Radwanski report. I could at this point ask Mr. Clemens, who chaired our subcommittee that dealt with the Radwanski report, to make a few comments if he wishes. I also realize that our time for presentation is drawing short. Perhaps we could come back in September and discuss this more fully. Mr. Clemens, did you want to say anything at this point?

Mr. Clemens: Yes. I will try to handle it quickly because Radwanski is quite a large topic to judge. Our position is that if we provide those basic skills at the elementary level—and those are really the comprehensive writing, reading and mathematical skills—then people can deal with whatever curriculum you put in place after that. If you can read at a grade 12 level and comprehend, then you can study history, you can read English, you can do all of it and do it as almost a self-education, but if you do not have the basis to do that, then it takes away from that ability.

I think that is where we then come right back again to employability, because those materials are written at a certain level of understanding as part of the college system. As we say in our brief, many of our people who come to community colleges today, maybe as high as 30 per cent in Ontario, cannot comprehend at the grade 12 level and yet they are being exposed to the text of a grade 12 comprehension level.

On the streaming one, I think we would perhaps like to come back to address that later if we could, because it is a large topic for this afternoon. My point is that I think if the basics are there at the beginning, then you can deal with whatever curriculum, whether you stream or not.

Mr. Villeneuve: Dealing with many small businesses, owner-operated businesses, would that also include, in your opinion, how students should possibly deal with the public—public relations? I understand many of our small businesses that deal directly with the public have

to teach their potential employees how to deal with people. Would that be part of the curriculum as you see it?

Mr. Clemens: It is always a balance for me between whether we make it a part of the curriculum or whether we do it by demonstration in the classroom itself by making it a matter of course. We hear people say that people do not come to work on time. Maybe if that is by demonstration in the classroom, people can learn. If you finish assignments on time and get them handed in on time, that is part of doing business as well. It is really part of the demonstration, I think.

Without being flippant, I think we would all agree that perhaps there was a time when we recognized poor service when we got it and now we recognize good service because we get it less often today. That is part of the responsibility of all of us. I would not lay it on the educational system necessarily, except by demonstration. If it is important to do something well, then it is important. I think those values stick with them, rather than trying to teach values, if you know what I mean, a course on values or whatever.

Mr. Villeneuve: Those are interesting observations. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. We will have Mr. Mahoney, followed by Mrs. O'Neill.

Mr. Mahoney: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Those are appropriate comments considering I was 10 minutes late in getting here. My apologies for that. Just before I ask a couple of questions, I should tell you, because I know she would be too modest, that Tennys Reid, a presenter here, is an employee of the University of Mississauga—I am sorry, the University of Toronto in Mississauga, known as Erindale College—and a past president of our board of trade. It is nice to see you, Tennys.

With regard to the comments you made, particularly about the crowded curriculum, we have been hearing a lot of that in the last several days. Prior to this hearing, I attended a conference in St. John's, Newfoundland, where American counterparts and Canadians from across the country were saying the same thing on education, that the curriculum is too crowded. How do you, however, reconcile the need, or do you agree that there is a need, to educate our young people on current affairs? The one that always comes up at these meetings is AIDS, but there are many like that, current health issues, how to handle certain things in such a complex society as our young people have to live in. I think we would all agree

that it is substantially more complex than what we grew up in.

If you take those things out of the crowded curriculum to make the curriculum more manageable, will you put them back in so that you have some assurance that these young people are going to get the proper information? The concern is that I am not sure you can rely on that information coming out at home. With due respect, I am not sure you can rely on it coming out in the media or even television programs *per se*. What do we do about those critical social problems that we have to educate our young people on?

Ms. Reid: I do not think there is any easy answer to that question. Certainly, I have heard debates on both sides. The problems we have are that we are not the same society that we were and what was done by the family and the church or whatever institution exists outside of the educational system may not be fulfilling the same function or, in some cases, it just is not there any more for particular cultures or individuals.

I think the education system has been left with so much. It cannot be the parent; it cannot be the only institution that is trying to instil values. On a very simplistic scale perhaps, you can treat those kinds of social issues the way the University of Toronto treated English at one point. We started marking chemistry lab reports for English grammar and they improved quite quickly and dramatically. Perhaps you can teach children about the relevant social issues of the time, but incorporate them into the English courses or the history courses and have them learn more about proper composition and expression at the same time as they learn about those subject areas.

Mr. Mahoney: I know the chairman has a supplementary, but before I give it to you, Madam Chairman, may I ask, would you support a concept where you could perhaps roll into one section of curriculum all of those kinds of concepts, be it personal hygiene, safe sex, family relations—and someone mentioned dealing with the public—life skills and all of that kind of thing? Would it make sense? I would be clearly concerned if my kids did not have an opportunity to get proper information about current affairs in school, current affairs that would affect them on a very personal level, a health level and a social level.

I would be concerned that we would just strip that out and say, "OK, sit down and study your math." There has to be more to education than sitting down and studying math, although I quite agree that is an important part.

1440

Ms. Reid: At first blush, that is an attractive idea, but I should confess that it is something that we have not considered. We should study it and comment more fully at a later date.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Certainly, I would like to see emphasis on teachers' qualifications and who teaches the course.

Mr. Mahoney: Yes, that would be true. You would have to back it right up, I suppose, would you not? You would have to make sure. They are teaching the stuff in the schools now, Mr. Cooke, and presumably they are briefed on it or debriefed on it, or whatever, when they actually teach it. There may not be someone who exists in the current system who is fully qualified to teach all of those things, but maybe there should be. I am just throwing it out as an idea.

Ms. Reid: On that issue, I have had the opportunity through this committee to sit on another committee under the Ministry of Education. The AIDS documentation that went out to teachers was very substantial. They were well briefed.

Mr. Mahoney: I do have another question, but perhaps you have a supplementary.

Madam Chairman: Yes, just very briefly and thank you. I appreciate that. Following along Mr. Mahoney's line of questioning, you have stated in your brief very clearly that literacy and numeracy should be the number one priority and that we should be pursuing a back-to-basics type of agenda.

Has the chamber considered what it would like to eliminate in our overcrowded curriculum?

Ms. Reid: We have not as yet at this point got a hit list, so to speak. What we need to do is take a fuller look at what is currently there and then discuss it in September, when I understand you want to talk about more specific items.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. Back to you, Mr. Mahoney.

Mr. Mahoney: Thank you, Madam Chairman. We had an interesting presentation the other day, some of which I agreed with and some of which I have some concerns with, from the Ontario Federation of Labour, at which time I think, it is not unfair to say, they put forward a viewpoint that would be, at least in some contrast to yours, about content-centred philosophy.

Their feeling is that there should be less business involvement in education and there should be a more general type of education going on, to teach philosophy and make people good thinkers. I think the example of having a thinking

plumber would be a nice goal to attain. That was said somewhat facetiously, because I am sure they are all good thinkers anyway.

But yours seems to be more specific on a content-centred concept—the difference between, say, a philosophy and a reality that we cannot have a bunch of graduates coming out of our secondary school system particularly, quite able to sit around and converse and have a wonderful philosophical discussion but unable to get a job. I just wonder about your feeling in relationship to those people who think we should go more towards teaching the ability to learn and the ability to think, that kind of thing, as opposed to the more specific content-centred philosophy you are talking about.

At what point do you get specific? At what age? Someone else suggested the age of 16. Up to 16, up to grade 10, everything should be of general educational value and then at that point they should be streamed into specific areas that might provide them with work skills.

We are seeing a little bit of a contrast in the presentations and I just wonder what your reaction to that is.

Ms. Reid: Perhaps I could comment on the content side. Our point is that you need the literacy and numeracy, but particularly the literacy, in order to be the great philosopher, in order to express yourself, in order to think and to learn how to analyse. It may be even more important for the plumber to be numerate.

Mr. Mahoney: He usually submits his bills on time.

Ms. Reid: In terms of streaming, I would ask Mr. Clemens if he would like to comment. We have not discussed a particular cutoff point, as we suggest before. We see that as a more specific kind of item which we would rather comment on in the fall.

Mr. Clemens: I think we always get into a dilemma when we try to define what we mean by content and noncontent. I guess we are talking about content, but in a way that says that in the elementary schools, there is every reason to believe—and we know that—children at the younger ages tune in very rapidly. They learn through doing and experimenting with all these exciting things.

I think we are saying let's take advantage of that at that point. We can teach English or we can build history as history. We can build AIDS into history and English. As we said earlier, it can be put together. I do not think we are looking at discrete blocks and saying, "Maybe we can take out three blocks here and put in another block of

that there." I think we can look at that in total and ask: "How do we actually teach history? How do we really teach English?"

At the universities today, in the business schools, they are saying, "If you are going to teach English skills to business graduates, you have to teach them right across the whole curriculum," because economics is part of that too. When you write an essay on economics, it is marked on English.

When you build that all together, I do not think we are talking about the content, because I think we need a thinking plumber and a thinking plumber is one who will have those skills of comprehension and numeracy and so on, and more so, I think, even in the future, because some plumbers today perhaps learned and they all know how to do it. Tomorrow they are going to have to deal with new stuff; new diagrams, new processes. They are going to have to be able to read and do that.

Instead of taking pieces out and putting pieces in, we should be looking at the total, "How do you teach at the elementary level?"

Mrs. O'Neill: I have always been very happy that the chambers of commerce I have been familiar with have reached out through the educational channels in their communities and I am very glad to know that you have an education committee and it seems to be an active one.

I am, however, somewhat distressed with what you said about the primary level and I am very happy that you said you are going to take a much closer look at primary before you come back in September. I have had quite close contact with the school system for a long time, I have volunteered at the primary level, and I certainly feel that level is much more than socialization. Maybe you can say something about four-year-old kindergarten as a socialization experience, and I certainly think that is one of its goals and objectives, but very soon remedial intervention takes place for students who do seem to be having difficulty with both numeracy and literacy.

Certainly that takes place in the primary years. With our government, and before, this province has taken the early identification project very seriously. A whole section of the ministry is concentrating on this level of education.

Our government will initiate in September 1988 what we call our primary initiative; that is, the lowering of our pupil-teacher ratio at the primary level. That is in direct response to requests that have been made for more pupil-teacher contact. Many students in this province are studying two languages, and some of them

who are involved in heritage languages, three languages at this early age.

I feel it would be very helpful to us as a committee if you did take a closer look at this. There must be some weaknesses. Nothing is perfect in this world, but I really do feel there is a lot of very good activity going on at the primary level in Ontario.

When we examine the process very closely, which we did when we put in the initiative of lowering the ratio, we discovered that many boards in this province have given special attention to this age group and many of them were at the goal we were trying to achieve as we started out on the project.

I think it is a very wide brush and I would appreciate a little more specificity, if you would come back to us and tell us exactly where you think there are still some weaknesses at primary.

Ms. Reid: We will be happy to do that.

Madam Chairman: I would like to thank the chamber for appearing before us today. I understand you have requested to come before us in September and we will look forward to hearing from you at that time as well.

Our next delegation will be the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations. Would the delegation come forward, please?

I would like to give the federation a particularly warm welcome. We have had a number of parents who have appeared before us so far but they have all been wearing other hats, so you are the first parents who have appeared as parents per se.

Welcome to our hearings. We look forward to hearing your viewpoints. Identify yourselves for the purposes of Hansard and begin whenever you are ready.

1450

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS INC.

Mrs. Bawden: I am Mary Bawden, the president of the federation. On my left is our second vice-president, Bev Perks, and beside Bev, our first vice-president, Jan Purvis. Our brief has just been distributed. I apologize for not getting it in sooner, but this is summertime. You all know what you are missing too.

I would like to begin our presentation by just commenting that the "Home and School Overview" is there for your information. The only thing that I think it lacks is the fact that we are not an official opposition in matters of education. We do like to support the things that we think are good and study those that need suggestions.

By way of introduction, the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations is pleased to make this presentation to the provincial government's select committee on education. The select committee members, in conducting this review of education philosophy and the fundamental goals of education in Ontario, will hear a wide range of opinions expressed by many groups having special interests in education. In the case of the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations, our membership, approximately 15,000 strong, involves parents of students currently in the public elementary and secondary schools across the province.

Through resolutions brought forward at our annual meeting and adopted by association delegates from all parts of Ontario, the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations has developed a significant body of opinion on various educational issues, and we are pleased to bring many of these opinions relating to educational philosophies and goals to the attention of the select committee.

The current 13 goals of the Ministry of Education are, in many ways, very similar to the nine goals of education outlined in the 1950 report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario. The number of goals has been increased and the wording of the goals has been expanded, but the basic student-centred intent remains the same. In our opinion, after this review process, any newly established goals of education will and should be substantially the same as the current goals.

The Ontario education system is one of the finest in the world and for this reason great care must be taken to ensure that the system is not weakened and fragmented when changes are proposed.

General comments, the school and society's responsibility: During these hearings, the select committee members will no doubt receive many submissions about curriculum content. However, we urge the committee members to exercise caution when considering curriculum add-ons. Even some of the existing goals of education are responsibilities to be shared by the schools and society in general, and it is important, we feel, not to further burden schools with society's role.

For example, the present goal 11 has students acquiring skills and attitudes that will lead to satisfaction and productivity in the world of work. While it may be feasible for schools to develop good work habits in students, attitudes such as flexibility, initiative, ability to cope with stress and regard for the dignity of work are much

more a factor of the student's home situation. We therefore encourage the committee members to concentrate on those areas of a student's education in which the schools can make a real and significant difference. The schools cannot do it all.

In setting out the current 13 goals of education, the Ministry of Education clearly indicates that these goals are not listed in any hierarchical order. There is no question that a prioritized list is difficult and contentious to establish; nevertheless, we feel strongly that it is appropriate for the Ministry of Education to clearly outline its educational priorities. We have taken into consideration our federation's resolutions over the past 20 years, and later in our presentation we will identify the goals which we feel will provide equal life chances and full development for each child.

We are concerned that the wording of the current goals as they are listed on the plaques "Goals of Education for the Province of Ontario" are vague. Many of the Ministry of Education documents list each goal and elaborate on its intent. We urge the committee to word these goals carefully and simply so that elaboration is not required.

I will now ask Bev to begin the comments on the current goals.

Mrs. Perks: Having reviewed each of the current 13 goals, we would like to present the following comments.

Goal 1 states that we should develop a responsiveness to the dynamic process of learning.

The learning process, or learning to learn, is an important ability which must be developed in students. In the Hall-Dennis report, importance was placed on enabling "young people to investigate freely, discuss, evaluate and decide." In 1988, we feel this goal carries added importance since it is predicted that students who will be graduating in the next century will be faced with several career changes and students who know how to learn will be best equipped to cope with these inevitable changes in their working life.

Goal 2 states that we should develop resourcefulness, adaptability and creativity in learning and living.

We feel that this goal would serve the education system better if applied to the learning process only. The living aspect confuses the intent and is already covered in other goals.

Goal 3 is to acquire the basic knowledge and skills needed to comprehend and express ideas through words, numbers and other symbols.

Home and school members have always considered this goal to be the most important role of the education system. Our members have called for boards of education to make their prime objective the teaching of the basic learning skills such as reading, writing and mathematics and have long supported the establishment of a basic core of content in the traditional subjects from kindergarten to grade 13, Ontario academic courses. The importance of reading has been particularly emphasized by our request that teachers be well trained in the techniques of teaching reading skills. Listening and viewing skills are also seen as important. We are pleased that media literacy has gained a place in the curriculum.

It is our view that this goal, clearly stated, is the area in which the school system can have its greatest impact.

Goal 4 is to develop physical fitness and good health.

Considerable support comes from home and school members for the inclusion of physical and health education in the curriculum. The curriculum content should be mandatory for students from kindergarten to grade 12. These courses should include not only physical fitness and the teaching of leisure-related sports activities but also nutrition information, smoking-drug-alcohol awareness programs, human sexuality and acquired immune deficiency syndrome information. Ideally, each elementary school should have at least one qualified physical and health education teacher on staff. Clearly, this is one goal of education which helps equip students for the future.

Goal 5 is to gain satisfaction from participation and from sharing the participation of others in various forms of artistic expression.

Visual arts, music and drama are important inclusions in a well-rounded curriculum. For many students, it is their only opportunity to participate in or observe and analyse these cultural experiences in the school setting.

Goal 6 is to develop a feeling of self-worth.

While this is a laudable goal, we wonder how much the schools can really do to fully develop a student's feeling of self-worth. Our members, as do many school boards, support the abolition of corporal punishment in schools and we feel that student achievement forms should be clear, factual and constructive in their content. Teachers, properly trained and sensitive to children's needs, will maintain positive and caring classroom environments. However, a child's experi-

ences outside the classroom play a significant role in developing the child's self-esteem.

Goal 7 is to develop an understanding of the role of the individual within the family and the role of the family within society.

Home and school members strongly support this goal of education. Whether as a separate course or incorporated into existing physical and health education courses, family living is seen by our members as a necessary part of their child's education. Perhaps as the definition of "family" changes, it is even more important that students have the opportunity to study the history and the stabilizing effect of the family, the relationships and responsibilities in families and the issues of marriage and parenting.

Mrs. Purvis: Goal 8 suggests that students should acquire skills that contribute to self-reliance in solving practical problems in everyday life.

1500

The skills referred to in this goal are included in a number of the elective courses that are taken by secondary school students and certainly give them the practical experience that they need.

Goal 9 suggests that students develop a sense of personal responsibility in society, not only locally but also nationally and internationally.

One of the things that we as a federation have long suggested is that there be high ideals of citizenship for students, specifically related to personal responsibility on the part of students. Our members have looked to school boards to develop vandalism awareness programs and to promote driver training and bicycle safety programs on a little bit wider perspective, to ensure students understand their responsibilities in society. We have supported the inclusion of Canadian themes in subjects such as geography, arts, music and literature. As far back as 1967, we were suggesting that Canadian history be mandatory at the secondary school level.

Goal 10 asks that students develop esteem for the customs, cultures and beliefs of a wide variety of societal groups.

As we have already indicated, we certainly have supported the Canadian history content. We have also, in the past, been very concerned that the story of the native peoples in Canada be included in the curriculum. We requested that opportunities be ensured for all students to become bilingual. Last year, in June, we were supporting the proposal for action having to do with the Ontario heritage languages program that was announced by the Minister of Education.

Goal 11 suggests that students acquire skills and attitudes that will lead to satisfaction and productivity in the world of work.

We have already mentioned that in our brief and we again reiterate that we feel this goal is something that the education system cannot accomplish alone. The schools have a role to play in developing attitudes, but a student's experience outside school will affect work habits, flexibility and ability to cope with stress. Schools do a good job of training students in basic and general business and technical skills. However, business and industry must fine-tune those skills to their own particular requirements.

Goal 12 suggests that students develop respect for the environment and a commitment to the wise use of resources.

Here, again, our members strongly support the teaching of environmental issues in the classroom. We have looked at concerns such as water pollution, excessive use of pesticides and phosphates, and recycling issues. They have all been discussed at our annual meetings and we have passed various resolutions asking for different actions on those particular issues.

Goal 13 suggests that students develop values related to personal, ethical or religious beliefs and to the common welfare of society.

The extent to which this goal can be implemented does not, in our view, include any particular religious dogma and/or practice. On the other hand, we feel strongly that discussing the various religious celebrations, such as Christmas and Hanukkah, should be encouraged in the classroom. Values education, however, can become very contentious. We feel strongly that school boards should certainly involve parents and other members of the community in the development of any local policies and curriculum guidelines in that particular goal.

Mrs. Bawden: In conclusion, we ask the select committee and the government of Ontario to proceed with care as they review the philosophy and goals of education.

If students are to have equal life chances, the education system must make its first priority the effective implementation of goals 1 and 3. It is in this area that schools have the greatest responsibility. We believe the Ontario education system is already successful in meeting these goals but must continually strive for excellence.

Many of the remaining goals of education cover the curriculum needed to develop the skills and processes outlined in goals 1 and 3. We are pleased that these curriculum documents are constantly being reviewed and revised. We

believe the local school boards should continue to have the autonomy to make programs flexible so that the needs of each child can be met.

It is appropriate for the province and school boards to use various testing instruments to determine how effectively program content and concepts are understood. These testing tools, however, must be used to evaluate the system, not the child. Testing must serve the system and not overpower it. As Duncan Green outlined, there have always been and will continue to be three areas of tension in the education system. We urge the committee members to avoid the extreme positions and to hold the pendulum in the middle of its swing, for it is there that the education system will provide the best for each child.

I asked to distribute to you one of our pamphlets, *Toward a Better Tomorrow*, because we too have objectives that we try to live by. It seems that objectives are becoming more important to our members and people in general, but more important, I think that where we have the child at the top of this structure on the back of the pamphlet is what it is all about. We wish the select committee much success in its deliberations.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much. Thank you also for leaving sufficient time for questions.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: In the mix of goals between the individual and the society that you refer to at the end, I wonder if you accept the notion that as a social goal for education we want kids from all walks of life and all ethnic groups to have the same possibilities and opportunities in the education system and, hopefully, similar results. Do you accept that notion?

Mrs. Bawden: Yes.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: If that is the case, and it has never been a stated goal of our education system—instead we have the 13 goals, which you ran us through today with your comments—it might be that by that measure one would have to say that the system has failed and that kids from poor families, generally speaking, are streamed low, do not graduate from high school in anything like the same levels as kids from middle-class families, certainly do not go to universities or post-secondary institutions.

I wonder therefore, in looking at our goals which are enunciated by the ministry, whether they are sufficient if we share the view that in some ways education should be a social equalizer, whether we have placed an emphasis on that as a goal in our society.

Mrs. Bawden: Is it the education system or is it society as a whole?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I would suggest it is both, but what we are dealing with here at the moment is the education system. If we set the goal we both agreed to a few minutes ago, that we want some more outcomes for those kids, and then look at what has happened, we can see that with our present listing of goals we have not achieved that.

I guess what I am asking is, is that because we have not accomplished the goals that have been listed out in the sort of individualized self-actualization I see these as, or is it because we have really never faced the fact that if we want kids from poorer families to get the same outcomes as the rest of us have had, we are going to have to do an awful lot of extra things for them to make sure it happens?

Mrs. Purvis: I guess my concern would be having the education system being seen to be solely responsible for that. I see that so many of the difficulties you are referring to relate not only to what is happening to education, but also to health issues, housing issues, minimum-wage issues. It is such a complex question, I think it is almost impossible to answer. Personally, my concern would be for this committee, as it looks at the goals of education, to stress—this is no surprise to you or any other member of the committee—how important the basic skills are and the emphasis that needs to be given to those skills in the primary grades.

It sounds like a replay of what you just heard a few minutes ago; nevertheless, I think that is the case. I think that regardless of some of the other issues surrounding children who are coming from poor families, the school's responsibility is the basics in the primary grades. I guess that is where I would hope the goals would focus.

1510

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I just suggest that in the past we have had those notions as our goals. The Ontario Metis and Aboriginal Association before us today talked about 80 per cent of their kids dropping out. A lot of them, as they put it, are not dropouts from high school, as the Radwanski report dealt with, but are in fact dropouts from public school.

You can look at the demographics of who comes out of the intercity schools of Toronto and where they go as compared with who comes out of Forest Hill Public School, and it is very clear that those kids do not make it. I am wondering if in some ways we now have brought in a politics of including kids with handicaps in the system

much more than we used to, and we have special programs to assist there that are now established in law, but we have never done anything in terms of recognizing in law the rights of those people who have a different kind of disadvantage and whom, by all measurements, our system has failed, and I agree with you, in conjunction with all the other social systems that are out there.

But with regard to suggesting that the three Rs or basics of some sort are going to make a difference, all we have to do is look back to the statistics in the 1950s to see what happened to those kids. We see that back then, when basics and the strap and other things were a rule of thumb, that kind of education by inculcation, indoctrination and rote, as it was in those days, did not help those kids out of the particular economic box they were in.

Mrs. Perks: I think my concern is that if, first, we can concentrate on making sure that every student who comes out of our education system has the ability to read well and to comprehend what he is learning and has literacy and numeric skills, we will have given him a good basis, a good grounding. Certainly, we are not going to stop the situation of children dropping out at an early age just by giving them the basic skills, but at least we can accomplish at an early point in their education providing them with the skills they are going to need to further themselves, whether they decide to go back for retraining or whatever.

What you are suggesting is that we start bringing in other programs to assist children in low economic situations. I think, yes, perhaps we should be looking at something like that, but I really do believe that the education system should put as its prime objective making sure there is not a child who leaves the elementary system who cannot read well.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I find it difficult to understand how we think a kid who goes to school hungry is going to be able to get those basic skills. What we have to recognize is that we do not all start off from the same position to get those basic skills. When we finally recognize that, the right resources will go to those kids so that they do not end up dropping out before they actually achieve those kinds of skills.

I know I am pushing the bounds by asking one more question, but in a survey I just did in my riding of attitudes around education, there were a number of really interesting attitudes. One of the realities which, I guess, I was not shocked by but which I think indicates a bit of the problem in the school system in general, was the very low

participation rate of parents in the school system. I offered them a number of choices of how they maybe were participating, and it was a very small percentage of people who had much of an involvement at all with their school system. They had great opinions about the school system but were not participating.

I am wondering if you could just give us a bit of an idea whether that is a continuing problem that you find through your organization as well, depending on the local leadership. At a given time, a group can be strong and then it can disappear. How do we increase the links of parents and the education system?

Mrs. Purvis: If we had the answer to that question at 15,000 strong, we would be much stronger. That is an ongoing battle faced not just by our organization; I think it is faced by any volunteer organization, regardless of what its particular concerns are that it is trying to deal with. Volunteerism is almost disappearing. We take as many steps as we can think of to try to encourage parents to be involved in the school community. Some of the encouragement for that and the incentive for that comes from the staff of a school, the generation of a feeling of welcome-ness that parents receive as they come into the school setting.

A lot of schools do that very well, and in spite of doing it very well, there is still limited involvement by parents. They are busy and they see that as something they do not need to spend their time at, other than a particular situation, such as a parent-teacher interview, Christmas concerts and graduations, where their own children are involved. Then, of course, they are there. What you do then is tack on a little bit of school philosophy, home and school business or something else, and get that done at the same time. That is a common problem regardless of what school you want to consider.

Madam Chairman: Before we move on to Mr. Jackson, I think Mr. Cooke has the tiniest of supplementaries.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I just want to go back to the comments you were making on going back to the basics. I would like to ask your reaction to the following statement: If we go back to a system like the 1950s or maybe before where the basics, at least according to people's memories, were taught better than they are taught now, would you not be concerned that, sure, the outcomes for those who make it through the system may be at a higher level, but how many are going to make it through the system? Are we going to go back to a system where a very small percentage make it

and those who make it do very well, but we lose a whole bunch of people throughout that 12 years?

Mrs. Purvis: It is maybe unfortunate that you thought by back to the basics we were suggesting going back to the 1950s style of teaching and presenting the basics. That is not the intent at all. I think the major emphasis of the system needs to be on the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics, but that is not to say we go back to the regimented, rote-type learning that existed then. I have no complaint about the methods of teaching. I think it is simply a case of continuing to address those basic skills, but certainly in no way to go back to the style of delivery.

Mr. Jackson: I would like to welcome the deputants, in particular Jan Purvis with whom I have had a 15-year working relationship through our mutual association with the Halton Board of Education.

I was very intrigued by your brief, partially by what was in it and also by what was not in it. I guess one of the things I did not see emerge was any comment about the role of the teacher in terms of ensuring that these goals and philosophies are fulfilled. Most groups have dealt with that. I get a sense of where you are coming from in terms of the pendulum and the three tensions, and I get a sense of where you are coming from with respect to curriculum, but I do not get a sense, even in your pamphlet, of the issue of teaching. Is there a reason for that?

Mrs. Bowden: Probably we just need a little more time. I think there are a lot of things that need to be developed in that area. I am not really dodging the question. It is just that it is an issue that evolves as you get into this topic. Then you go from the teacher back to teacher training and it snowballs into a long topic to try to develop. We did not do it.

Can you add something that is more specific?

Mrs. Purvis: I think we have in the past responded to all the reports from the ministry having to do with teacher training; and supporting the concept, first of all, of teachers having a bachelor's degree in addition to their bachelor of education degree. We have also supported the concept of some type of apprenticeship period, perhaps not as long as was originally suggested, but that there be that kind of training rolled into the development of someone headed towards a teaching certificate.

Mr. Jackson: I did not want to imply that your report was incomplete in any way. It is very brief and it is very concise. I just wanted to ask about that.

I read your pamphlet. You have taken the 13 goals we are examining. We are looking at where they are perhaps deficient, since it has been 20 years since we have reviewed them.

An area I am quite concerned about, and we heard only two references, is the very general area of gender discrimination and how the school system can be helpful in terms of overcoming that, as well as dealing more directly with the issues of family violence and child sexual abuse.

It was not in your brief, but I notice in your pamphlet it is the very first item you mention in terms of the areas you support. Looking at item 7, most of the groups that have come forward, when dealing with issues of the family do not deal with those two issues. I do not know whether it is intentional or whether it is just an oversight. I thought perhaps you would have included that. I do not want to misinterpret that.

Can you tell me your position on that and if in fact you feel the goals in education should be a little stronger in terms of gender equity as it is taught in our schools and in terms of the positive environment a school can create for a child who is suffering from abusive situations, as a corrective alternative and means of guidance in a child's life?

Mrs. Purvis: To deal with the gender equity question first of all: to my recollection, I do not believe that has come up as an issue among delegates when we have been dealing with resolutions.

Mr. Jackson: So you have not had a resolution on sexism in schools and curriculum and so on?

Mrs. Purvis: That is right.

Mr. Jackson: You have never had one of those.

Mrs. Purvis: That has not been raised as an issue, at least at that level. It could well have come up at a local level and never have made it to a provincial level of discussion.

When you refer to the issue of child sexual abuse, that is one area in which we have been very active, both provincially and nationally. In fact, particularly in the Metropolitan Toronto area, the home and school association has been very supportive and very involved through all the development of the—the name of the committee escapes me.

Mr. Jackson: Metrac?

Mrs. Purvis: The Metropolitan Toronto Committee on Child Sexual Abuse. We have been involved with that group from the initial stages. Certainly, in terms of that being a concern and

looking at that as an issue that needs to be addressed by schools as they are dealing with children, we have been very involved.

Mr. Jackson: I would like to recommend the Metrac brief to you as it specifically relates to education and the goals of education in Ontario, in the hope that some day soon it might make its way into your resolution at one of your congresses or annual general meetings.

My third question has to do with what appeared at the bottom of the list of your initiated or supported actions. I quote from your pamphlet, "Increased government support for retarded children's schools." Could you help me to come to the conclusion that you are going to be reprinting that and that you will be eliminating that verbiage?

While I am on that subject, could you give us any insights with respect to the issue of integration versus segregation, given that you represent all families within your confederation? We are hearing that as a program it is being done in a sort of patchwork, ad hoc way in this province. Have you had any resolutions with respect to this important issue?

Some Down syndrome associations were before us yesterday and they brought those arguments very clearly. They obviously have not taken a pendulum-in-the-middle position, but I would be most anxious to hear from you on that, because again it is an area where we are being encouraged to develop new language with respect to the goals in Ontario.

I would like to get some feedback on the two areas I believe we are going to be moving in.

Mrs. Perks: I think integration into the classroom is helping in respect to—if I can use the term very generally—the average child. I also see a lot of benefits for the child who has a problem or who has a physical disability or a mental disability, because it provides an opportunity for that child to see what is happening around him, not just what is happening in a very small aspect of his life.

I think children with disabilities require integration. They require an opportunity to be with the children of all faces. On the other side of the coin, I think it is important for a child who does not have a disability to learn to accept and appreciate the limitations of a child with a disability.

I know that is kind of sitting on the fence on the issue, but I think it is important that our organization looks at all children and we are representing all children. When we present something to a committee such as this, we are not

just representing a child who has a certain condition and we are not representing a certain issue. We are looking at children from all across Ontario, from all religions, all disabilities or whatever.

I think integration is important. I think we have not done it as well as we could. I think there certainly is a lot of room for improvement. I hope that through your deliberations you come up with something a little more directional, but I really do strongly feel it is very important for a child with a learning disability to have that opportunity, as well as for a child who does not have a learning disability.

Mr. Jackson: Are we to understand you have not had a resolution per se of your association on the integration question?

Mrs. Purvis: Not on the integration question.

Mrs. Perks: No, not to provincial level.

Mrs. Bawden: I have had parents approach me concerned about children who were being integrated; and I said, "OK, you bring us a resolution asking for more support for those children," and before the time of preparation for the resolution had expired the problem had expired. I think what we are hearing is the initial reaction, and then as the whole system falls into place it becomes a good experience for everybody.

Mrs. Perks: I think the fact we are not receiving a resolution at the provincial level does not say that the situation has not been there and dealt with at a lower level of the organization. I think, locally, integration does become an issue which is handled at the board levels.

Mr. Jackson: I would like to commend the group for its work. I just would like you to get a little more into the sexism and gender concerns that have been raised, because I think it is very important that we get home and school associations making some comments about that.

Mrs. Bawden: On a personal note, I have a daughter who is a chemical engineer. It becomes difficult for me to try to make comments about the gender problem, personally.

Madam Chairman: We have a few minutes left, and I think Mr. Keyes has the final question for the committee.

1530

Mr. Keyes: I just wondered, in general terms, with respect to home and school associations and their representation of the community and the parents that I have been connected with in all my teaching career, is it growing, flourishing; are

people moving away from it; are you finding it more difficult to get them interested and involved?

It is my observation that in certain parts of the province that is what is happening: it is becoming more difficult to keep the involvement. I wonder if you have experienced that and if you have studied it. What are some of the aspects of the educational system that tend to keep the communities from becoming involved to a greater extent?

In our area we have seen a total drop-out of home and school as such, but you have community education forums—different names. They are the same thing in a sense, and yet not the same. Where are you on that one, just before I ask any other questions?

Mrs. Bawden: I think we are continually working at trying to involve and welcome all groups of parents who want to become involved. I think the most important factor is whether or not they want to put the time out, or can, because it is a fact of society that if there are two parents who are working to feed the children, let alone to join the rest of the organizational sorts of things that happen, it is a society that demands parents do an awful lot of things for their children.

Mr. Keyes: They are not doing as much for the children now as they used to, I guess, but you have not answered my question. Can you answer it?

Mrs. Bawden: They are at the local level. They are driving kids here and there all over the place to organized activities, and there seems to be little time left for their own organizational involvement.

Mr. Keyes: Can we come down to the crux? This is not being critical, but just looking at reality, are we increasing in our numbers of chapters of home and school or are we not diminishing quite dramatically in numbers across the province?

Mrs. Bawden: At the present time we are pretty well balanced. We may lose a few, but we gain them in other areas.

Mr. Keyes: Maybe I can take another tack, since I have not quite got the answer on that one at all. I think the phenomenon I saw in Frontenac county is the same in other parts of the province. I thought you might react, because I do agree they fulfil a big role.

Your role might be more fulfilling if you more or less embraced, as an umbrella group, some of the other groups we have seen appearing before us who are trying to get changes in the system.

When you try to reflect parents, teachers, community, etc., and all of those groups, you might be able to bring some of them in under your umbrella in an affiliate capacity.

The brief basically, as I have quickly scanned it, is one that is very complimentary to government and the Ministry of Education. I was trying to find within it any sense of criticism. I could not find that. Usually we are not without tons of them appearing before us who are ready to jump on us every moment.

I wonder if we could get the gloves off for just a moment and give us a little bit of a gut reaction on the things you would like to see changed if you really were in the position to make some of those changes. I did not sense it in your brief.

Mrs. Purvis: I think probably the basic issue that comes up over and over, and the one that we mutter about and complain about, has to do with the funding of education. It has to do with class size and pupil-teacher ratio, which is obviously a shared responsibility between the school board and the ministry. It also has to do with accommodation. A lot of the areas in which there are a lot of home and school associations are also areas where the population is expanding at a great rate and they have difficulty accommodating all of the students who are to be housed in something or other.

Probably that would be the major criticism we would have: the funding and the lack of funds to do the necessary things, at least as we perceive them.

Mr. Keyes: When you talk about funding, is it primarily on the quantity of funding provided or has the association looked at all at the methods of funding? We have had presentations this week about getting away from the property tax base and going back to income tax as one of the suggestions, among others. Is it quantity, I gather, not manner?

Mrs. Purvis: Basically, yes.

Mr. Keyes: Again, as an association, have you ever taken the stance that you support increased funding to education? We had businessmen say to us today that they have to balance their budgets. I said to my partner here that if we followed their dictum, we would simply continue to provide everything and continue to raise the taxes almost indiscriminately in order to balance it. They raise the price of their product to balance their operation. We would simply do the same thing by increasing taxes even more than has happened. Do you think that would still reach a fair amount of favour with the population you represent?

Mrs. Bawden: In our brief to the financing of education commission, we did not support personal income tax as a way of supporting education. We suggested that the commercial and industrial assessment within a community should remain within that community as a tax base and that if it needed to be split between the two systems as we have them now, it should be split on the basis of children within each system rather than on any other formula you might find. We felt it was the children who needed the support.

What other issues come out of that? There were a lot of them, but we did get into that sort of structure.

Mr. Keyes: I appreciate getting those views on it. They are the ones that we hear and they all have to do with the whole philosophy of education and the goals.

Mrs. Bawden: There is another gloves-off area—

Mr. Keyes: That is what I was looking for.

Mrs. Bawden: It might be, how do we find those students who can get through the system without being able to read? Part of it is because some of those kids are so smart. How on earth did they get that smart? Where did this all originate from?

Mr. Keyes: That was one of my contentions when I had the opportunity to serve as the Minister of Correctional Services. I almost became embarrassed for the first time in my life for being a teacher, for the hundreds of young people I found in our penal institutions across the province who openly admitted to me they could not read or write.

I stated, "How long were you in the school system?" They would say, "Maybe eight years." So I have gone back and spoken to my fellow principals' organizations and teachers' organizations saying, "How can we hold our heads up and how do these people get through the system?" I still failed to find out and understand how young people could spend eight years in a school system and still not have the basic fundamentals of reading a grade 1 or grade 2 primary-type book. I saw hundreds of them that we now put into literacy programs in those institutions who definitely could not read.

Mrs. Bawden: It is probably something that should be studied to determine just what has happened. Is it because of the child's intelligence? Just how does it happen that they get there?

Madam Chairman: It is not very often that we have a member of the Legislature who is brave enough to invite the public to take off the gloves and have at us. I notice the home and school federation picked up that challenge very quickly. Thank you very much for your comments today. I also noticed Mr. Johnston was there applauding in the background.

Our next delegation is from the Ontario Association for Continuing Education. Come forward, please.

Welcome and please be seated. Once you are seated, if you would identify yourself for the purposes of electronic Hansard, you may go right into your presentation. We do hope, however, that you will allow enough time at the end for members to question you.

Mrs. Dobell: Yes, we understood about half the time at least for questions.

Madam Chairman: Please proceed.

ONTARIO ASSOCIATION FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

Mrs. Dobell: I am Jane Dobell and I am a trustee of the Ottawa Board of Education but I am also chair of the policy committee of the Ontario Association for Continuing Education.

Mr. Thomas: I am Alan Thomas from the department of adult education, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, and a member of the board of the Ontario Association for Continuing Education.

Mrs. Dobell: We are delighted to be here to participate in your review of educational philosophy. Given the stated purpose of the hearings here today, we have restricted our remarks to the philosophical issues and we would like very much to come back in the autumn to deal with the specific regulatory and administrative aspects.

1540

Responding to Mr. Keyes, who wants gut reactions—

Mr. Keyes: I get tired of niceties.

Mr. Thomas: We are not nice at all.

Mrs. Dobell: —we are here to say that our prime concern is directed to the student. "Who should the students be in a school system?" is the question we ask, and we are saying that schools are for communities; they are not just for children.

We, therefore, define continuing education not as a third system, which was the definition of a very good report made by Mr. Maudsley, who is in the room with us today, but we believe that Ontario must commit itself to a system of

genuine continuing education. So we are defining continuing education as a system of education providing for multiple entrances and exits, accessible to all students according to their educational needs, independent of age. So the elementary and the secondary school would play a role in this system. They would not be it all, but they would be defined by their objectives and not by the age of their students.

How would we get a school system based on the notion of continuing education? We are sure that you are aware of the hundreds—maybe thousands if I had to prove it—of reports which have taken place in the last 15 or 20 years in Canada and in all the technically advanced societies about the need for ongoing opportunities for the education and the re-education of all our students. I do not think there is a serious educator today who would believe that education is still exclusively concerned with the young, that it would be a one-time experience at life's beginning. Those days are past.

Yet, unfortunately, although we all agree with kind of lip service to this notion of continuing education, the Education Act we now have and the regulations under it do not reflect the new philosophy. You may be interested to know in a survey in 1985, done by Gerry Wright, one of the ones we have here, *For Adults Only*, not one school board mentioned adults or the mature student in its mission statement. So it is not only the Education Act and its regulations but it is also the school board mission statements that do not express this public philosophy of education which is to be based on continuing education. It is to this goal that we urge your committee to devote your attention, to redefining who are the clients and how we must serve the whole clientele and not just a small part of it.

You are aware, as we all are, that there are considerable resources devoted to the education of adults and you must have seen the various reports; there is one from Statistics Canada a few years ago which said about 20 per cent of the adult population were engaged in any one year in formal educational programs. Other reports have given larger figures.

What you may not be aware of and what I think is very important in terms of your task is that the bulk of these participants who are in continuing education, with the exception of those being served by the public school system, are all those who have already succeeded. It is the ones who have succeeded, who are good at it, who come back for more and the unique exceptions are those who come back to the public system where

they are more accustomed to dealing with the disadvantaged student and more prepared to adapt to the student who needs this more elementary level of education.

So you have a system where those who are coming back to education are those who have already benefited. You have a few who are coming back to the public system who are at the lower socioeconomic level but all of this is a relatively small proportion of those who need access to education. We cannot survive as a democratic society or as a successful economy if close to half of the adult population remains outside of the mainstream activities and of any access to education at all.

We would like to draw to your attention that changes have already taken place in public education, particularly at the secondary school level, and that the system is not that any more which is reflected by the popular press or in any of the official reviews which we think come before you.

The system is not totally preoccupied with children and youth, nor with the provision of progressive programs leading to secondary school diplomas. In 1987, there were nearly 20,000 full-time, daytime students of 22 years and older in the school system. If you lower that to 20 years, the figures double.

These figures, the 20,000-plus or 40,000, depending on where you cut it, are outside continuing education. These 20,000 are enrolled right in the schools. If you were to add the continuing education figures, there are a number of ways you could look at it, but in 1986, there were over 200,000 in addition in grantable courses for continuing education.

Another way to think of that is that it is twice the number of children in special education programs in the province, it is 40,000 more than all the children in junior and senior kindergarten in the province; so it is not a peripheral activity. It is important and the numbers are there, even though the press in the general perception of the educational system has lagged behind this knowledge and this fact.

There are many different kinds of programs in the continuing education provision. There is the evening class, as you know. There is English as a second language, there is literacy; but there are also the general interest courses, and they are not included in the figures I have been giving you. The figures I have given you come from the ministry and are related to the grants. General interest courses are outside.

You must view school boards as financing their courses for adults in a variety of ways, because all the general interest courses are outside the grantable system and may be taxed for and in most cases are taxed for.

You must see that the presence of older students in the daytime, many of them mothers with small children, has led to the inclusion in secondary schools of day care centres, which often provide opportunities for young people to learn the skills of caring for small children. I think you see a school system, particularly in the larger urban areas, which is not the common stereotype at all.

I want to think a little bit about the notion of equity. If you take this report and turn to the last two printed pages, you will see a chart which came from the Ministry of Education. It is headed, "Continuing Education Per Capita, 1985." It is page 60.

You will see that Renfrew county, to pick one out, number 3, provided 245,000 hours of continuing education. These are all grantable courses. It had 86,900-odd in its jurisdiction. That is public and separate together. That is all rolled in together, without saying which board it is. You will see the last column, "Hours provided per 1000 capita." They provided 2,823 hours of continuing education per capita.

You could take number 10, Lake Superior, going down. It provided 1,692 hours per capita. I am deliberately not choosing the cities, Ottawa and Metro.

Now flip to the very last page and take a look at Elgin county. It has 69,200 and some, but it did not provide any hours. Take a look at the bottom one, number 59, Muskoka. It had 37,900 and some. It did not provide any hours.

I have given you extreme cases to talk about the notion of equity. I am saying, therefore, a lot is happening at school boards. It is good stuff, but it sure ain't equal. The thought that we are concerning ourselves with equal access certainly does not apply in this field at all. These developments are real; they are large and they are important, but they are unevenly distributed across the province and among municipalities within a given area. They do manifest themselves sufficiently to indicate that radical and important changes have taken place and continue to take place in the secondary schools of Ontario.

1550

I am sure you agree there is no reason to think that economic and social factors are going to change so that these developments will diminish. The reverse is true. We expect to see the need for

adult education increasing. But the question I am here to put to you is unless you examine the philosophy of education from this perspective and unless you make serious changes to the Education Act and its goals, we will not see the needed adaptation of the secondary school system which will allow these schools to respond to the adult needs. That is the question before your committee.

One of the other points I want to make is that of the school boards which have responded to these needs, many of them have been generous; they have taxed themselves a great deal, they have been flexible and they have had tremendous amount of imagination. I am sure many of you are aware of the kinds of things happening in the city of York, where Dale Shuttleworth is, and the kinds of outreach programs in factories they have been running there. Some of the things the boards have been doing are very exciting. They deserve a lot of credit.

I think you will agree that a voluntary clientele will always require kind of confused and untidy provisions. If people have to be in school, things can be neat and you can tell them what to do and you can have one system. But if you are dealing with a voluntary clientele where the adult decides whether he will come and where he will come, and when and how and if and what, you cannot have something that is regulated from the top down; you have to have autonomy at the local level to respond to the needs of the community, so that the school boards are able to work imaginatively with the welfare agencies and the municipalities and whatever the needs may be.

I want to make a very strong plea for the autonomy of school boards. I suppose there is some danger that the more the province pays for something—and, as you know, we are in this 100 per cent idea for some of the continuing education courses at the moment—perhaps the more it is going to regulate it. I think that may not be the healthy way to go. If we can develop a system where adults have rights and school boards have obligations and then let the schools go at it and develop their ways of serving their community with their own imagination, that is perhaps a better way to go than trying to regulate it too much from the top down, because it cannot be done.

We believe we can demonstrate that major changes in educational provision have already taken place in Ontario and that the changes are beneficial to the new populations of adults being served, to the community, to the province, to the children and youth who are now and who will be

in the schools. We are therefore asking the committee to acknowledge these developments, to accept not only their legitimacy but also their creative potential and to move to provide the philosophical, legislative and managerial supports they require.

With regard to the administrative, financial and program details, we would like to come back and talk to you in the autumn. We want therefore to focus on the kind of principles the new system would have to be based on.

The first one is the educational rights of adults. Adults must have clear rights to attend schools based on educational need and individual commitment. Of course, rights and obligations are flip sides. If an adult has a right, then the school board has an obligation. At the moment, it is grace and favour and there is no obligation on the part of school boards to serve adults.

The autonomy of school boards as to how they serve these adults need not and must not be reduced. In fact, it would be very detrimental if it were reduced, serving a voluntary population. It must be clear that a credit student is a credit student, regardless of age, time, circumstance or participation. This has to be reflected in all aspects of the management of the system, including, in my view, the contractual relationships of the teachers. The freedom of boards must be continued, to allow them flexibility in finance, in contractual relationships with other community organizations and in program development so that they can respond to the needs of the community.

In closing the formal part of our remarks, I am sure you are aware that one of the things lacking in the undereducated adult is self-confidence. As the undereducated adult begins to succeed in the mastering of simple reading and writing and in numeracy and literacy, it is the self-confidence of the individual that is developed.

This leads many of them to determine to pursue their education further and, also, it increases their whole activities as citizens in our society. In Ontario, we cannot do without this development of self-confidence and pride in the nearly three million citizens who, because of the lack of educational achievement, are lacking in that self-confidence. The public school system is the only avenue to those achievements for many—not all, but for many—of these adults.

I have deliberately left a lot of time for questions. Dr. Thomas, would you like to make a statement?

Dr. Thomas: I do not think so. I was interested in questions.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. We appreciate the fact that you have left sufficient time for questions. You are the first group that has appeared before us that has focused on continuing education, so we certainly find your comments valuable.

Mrs. Dobell: We are used to that.

Madam Chairman: It is nice to be unique, is it not?

Mrs. Dobell: I am not so sure. It is a bit lonely.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Johnston, would you like to start off the questioning, please?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Thank you, Madam Chairman. I think it is interesting that it is often the case that you are the sole voice out there that is expressing this as an organization. We have not seen this focus. When we look at the goals for education that the ministry has afforded us, these 13 goals, they are all these self-actualization goals for kids in the system, but have nothing to do with the notion of what you are putting forward, education is for communities, a collective kind of notion of learning. So I am very pleased to see you here, doing that again.

I have a couple of questions, because this whole area has been of interest to me and to our party in terms of trying to come to grips with our own policy on these matters. In looking at what is happening out there, although you are painting a fairly rosy picture about change, it strikes me that our overall education system is pretty hierarchical and elitist and that the continuing education system is as elitist as any other. You refer to it in passing.

The vast majority of people who participate are people with a very good education. As I recall, only something like five per cent of people with less than grade 9 education in the last national survey actually participate, and only 12 per cent who left after high school. That says to me that the system as it exists now for continuing education within the public system and colleges; and that which is provided by employers, primarily is incredibly elitist and is not meeting any of the goals which you are now enunciating in terms of these rights of adults in general.

I note in your report, and I found it again as I was looking through—I think it is on page 20—you talk about breaking the poverty and illiteracy cycle and you use that as the hopeful role of the public education system to be able to do that. There are some examples, but on the whole, I see just the opposite of that, that there is no coming to grips with these very large social constrictions

that are there on our socioeconomically disadvantaged people, that we do not have any recognition of it in terms of goals of the education system. We do not have any recognition of it in terms of the goals of any of the boards of education in Ontario.

I guess what I am throwing at you is to ask how do we make it the democratic, populist kind of system you and I think it should be? How do we make that happen?

Dr. Thomas: Basically, what you say is accurate. What Jane and I are arguing is that where it is inaccurate is exactly where we believe this committee ought to focus its attention; that is, if you go to the population of daytime, full-time students, you will find that they are not in the élite group.

Mrs. Dobell: Within the school.

1600

Dr. Thomas: I am talking about the secondary schools. They are not in the élite group. They are to a large extent single parents. They are to a large extent women. They are to a large extent people who are living either on welfare or, when they can manage it, on unemployment insurance. That is one of the areas that needs to be clarified in this country. I think essentially what we have been arguing is precisely your argument, that it is within the policy of the elementary and secondary schools that those changes that you are recommending can be made. That is how we can attract them.

It is apparent that the literacy programs are dealing on a larger scale with exactly the population. My own argument would be that literacy may not be nearly as important as the fact that we are for the first time reaching that particular group of people and that if they learn to be literate, they may also develop a confidence and have it to learn other things as well.

Essentially, we are saying that by supporting the rights of adults, in the secondary schools in particular, that that is the major educational instrument for moving in the direction you suggest.

Mrs. Dobell: That is the point.

Dr. Thomas: And we do not know another one.

Mrs. Dobell: Certainly some school boards, such as a group of Metro Toronto boards, are convinced, reach out and spend considerable effort and time. But there are those who are not convinced—just happenstance elects these people, who do not run thinking adults; they run thinking children—and if they do not address

themselves to this problem, what you get is this uneven provision that I have shown.

If the Education Act were clarified—and some of us are looking to clarify it by court case, which I do not think is the best way to create your new society—and if the obligations of school boards were made clear to school boards, then school boards are really quite imaginative and good at doing things once they set their minds to it.

We have certainly found at the Ottawa board that in our disadvantaged area schools, where we start parents-as-learners programs, the motivation of the children to learn increases and that is how we are trying and indeed succeeding in these cases to break the illiteracy and poverty cycle. I think they are doing that in Toronto and in Hamilton.

Let's take the Hamilton board particularly. They have tried to reach out to adults who are trying to combine work and learning. The Education Act regulations are not in favour of that, apparently, because they have to get a special dispensation to start a class at 7:30 in the morning so that the people can take their class and go to work. Imagine regulations which prevent you reaching the clientele that is trying to work and learn at the same time. It is silly.

Dr. Thomas: Sometimes they even have to get permission to start on some day other than September 1.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I gather what you are arguing for is—

Mrs. Dobell: Houseclean the act.

Mr. R. F. Johnston:—a restatement of goals and permissive additions to the act rather than mandatory.

Mrs. Dobell: No. I am saying that the rights of adults must be clarified. I think if we went to court on it now, we would win, but it would be more graceful if the government would clarify the legislation on its own without a court case. Let us clarify the rights of adults. Let us state the obligations of school boards to serve them. Those are not stated in the act now. Let us houseclean the act in its regulations so that they may serve them.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I have just one last question about a group of people you were alluding to in the Hamilton situation, people who are working and probably have low education levels or are in factories, etc. Where do you see paid education leave fitting into all this? It seems to me it is a very different matter for a professional to re-enter and take courses than it is

for a shift worker, etc. How do you see that working?

Dr. Thomas: It would be a great thing if the government of Canada would support the protocol. It would even be greater if we could move in the direction of some statutory provision for it. As you know, there have been two major federal government reports related to it, and I think we are inching our way towards it as a policy, but we have not made it yet. There is no question that this broadens the basis of participation for the people whom we are concerned with.

However, it is fairly clear from the evidence in those European countries where there has been some form of statutory paid educational leave for over a decade that time and money are not enough, that what happens is that we lower the level of participation to the next-best-educated. So we get the better-educated workers, but by simply making paid educational leave available, we do not get the lowest level of people, who are generally left out.

Sweden and West Germany have experience with other programming additions, having already established the statutory right to paid educational leave, and that seems to be making some move, but there is no question—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: In the absence of traditions like the study circles in Sweden, how much difference do you think it makes?

Dr. Thomas: It is hard to tell. Germany and France have both found that they have picked up the next level down, but not the very bottom level of least-educated, at whom paid educational leave is basically aimed. You have to introduce some educational strategies, as well as the financial and temporal ones, to deal with it.

Mrs. Dobell: You mentioned the combining of work and learning, which I think we all support. Yet how many high schools—I think it is the majority—tumble their timetables so that the subject is never offered at the same time in the day, so that it is impossible to combine work and learning because your subjects tumble through the day and you cannot have a job?

Dr. Thomas: If you have children, as I have, you will have heard them on the phone to each other saying, "Is this day 7 or day 8?" When you run it that way, then you have barred an external constituency from making use of it at all.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I still have trouble with "Is this Tuesday?"

Mrs. Dobell: That is right.

Madam Chairman: I am glad you said it, Mr. Johnston. I would never do that to a fellow Trentite.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I know.

Madam Chairman: We have three remaining on our list and approximately 10 minutes.

Mr. Keyes: I appreciate the points of view you have put across, and I wholly accept the concept that we should try to talk more about the philosophy of continuing education. Actually we do, you know, and as Mr. Johnston said, no one has come forth with the view you have. I would say the majority of people who have appeared before us have already said that learning is an ongoing continuum and that it goes well beyond schools and there is a role to be played in industry.

If you even look at the aims as expressed by the royal commission in 1950, it very specifically said that we must develop the concept that education is a continuing process beyond the school. So I think we have said it, and if you want to look at all the 13 goals, nowhere in them is there anything to say that it has to be restricted to elementary and secondary. I think that rather than the philosophy of education, it is much more a philosophy of living that we should try to get everybody to accept.

I worked in an environment for many years where I think we had a very sophisticated, in a sense, continuing educational system. Years ago, we used to run a day care centre within my school. We looked after the infants of young, single-parent mothers, and others who were not single parents, who wanted to return to high school. We were across the street, so we ran the day care centre so that the mothers could go to school in the morning and go to work in the afternoon and we had their children. We did that for years and it worked extremely well.

We also were the centre for all the continuing education programs for the whole community, and I am happy to see that out of the 59, Frontenac county does rank 12th.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Still; even without your influence.

Mr. Keyes: Well, this was taken just as I was leaving, 1985. I am sure it has depleted since. We will look to see the new 1988 figures. This was 1985.

Mrs. Dobell: Why do you not update the report card? These are out-of-date figures because the ministry did them for us. It would be interesting to know what it was in 1987.

Mr. Keyes: Yes, it would, because this is an 1985 figure. It was high then.

I have two questions on this. I think there is a lot in there. I think it is what you are saying and I

think what this whole thing has shown me over the last two weeks is that there are very few people who can be critical of the aims or goals or whatever you want of the system. But it is the delivery mechanism, to a large extent, that is lacking and not meeting what they want. I think the opportunity is there but the mechanisms have not been put in place, and it is the same thing with continuing ed.

As an example, I think it is fine that we should have the adults having—I am not sure how far your “rights” for them would extend, and you talk about the responsibility of school boards. I would also want to look at the responsibilities of those adults to whom we assign rights, because with every right comes a responsibility. You seem to infer that the right was to the adults, but the responsibility had to go to school boards. They have to be together, the right and the responsibility.

1610

Mrs. Dobell: I agree.

Mr. Keyes: That is all mechanics. Do adults who go pay 50 per cent, or is it a dollar-for-dollar type of situation? Is every bit of education that is open to an adult automatically free? If you do that, where is the accountability, which the ministry must accept, to the general public? They are all things that can be worked out that simply are in the mechanics of delivering the system.

I was just wondering, in a quick aside, as you looked at these interesting figures, did you do any analysis of the Prescott-Russell situation to see why it is more than double, almost triple, the amount of time and expense?

Mrs. Dobell: I can assure you the Ministry of Education people, when they produced these figures for us, jumped out of their shoes when they saw this and rushed down there. I am sure if you got today's chart, it would be a little different. There are definitional problems involved. But even if you fixed it up and divided by half—I do not know what they found—they are still out there, so obviously there are some definitional problems.

This illustrates the problems in data collection and access to accurate data so that we can have an intelligent conversation. There is not the data support in this province so that we can discuss this properly.

Mr. Keyes: That is one of the things, of course, we find across the province. In the matter of health, why are we spending \$60 million for new computers in the Ministry of Health? It is to supply us with a better database on which to do

things. Why are we spending \$60 million in the Ministry of Correctional Services for a new computer? It is so we will know where there is a vacant spot when a person goes to court tomorrow morning, in order to accommodate someone.

I think basically the opportunity is there. I support fully the idea that we must give more support to the continuing education side of it, but I would like you to comment just a bit on the responsibility of the adult community and clarify it. You seem to give me a nod that says you feel the education of adults on a continuing basis would be a totally free and accessible type of situation.

Mrs. Dobell: Yes, I do at the elementary and secondary levels. In other words, I do not think we should be paying totally for people to go to university or college or to do any number of things that you and I might discuss, but I do feel that an elementary and secondary level of education is a right in today's society.

Mr. Keyes: Could I just follow up? When you say “elementary and secondary,” you mean the courses that are currently prescribed by the Ministry of Education.

Mrs. Dobell: Yes.

Mr. Keyes: I guess I look at it as continuing education.

Mrs. Dobell: I do not mean belly dancing. I do not want to have that discussion with you.

Mr. Keyes: You are not talking about belly dancing courses, cake baking and all that.

Mrs. Dobell: No, that is different. I am talking about those that the Ministry of Education is granting. They are granting courses for credit; they are granting for English as a second language so that our newly arrived immigrants can integrate into our society, and they are granting for literacy, which is really a credit but at a lower level, if you like: the basic skills. Those courses should be a right, and free.

Mr. Keyes: I see the educational system as still taking a role in continuing education in the other interest courses—

Mrs. Dobell: It is wider.

Mr. Keyes: Much wider.

Mrs. Dobell: I agree.

Mr. Keyes: —but ones where there is the responsibility of adults to pay for what they get.

Mrs. Dobell: Yes, I agree.

Mr. Keyes: That can be done on a much broader system and the school should be on a 24-hour-day system.

Mrs. Dobell: I agree with that. There is a distinction there, I agree.

Dr. Thomas: Mr. Keyes, I suspect you would be more aware than most that school boards have had their ups and downs in this area. In the 1960s, they were providing a very wide range of programs for adults until the colleges were introduced. Then, all of a sudden, everybody thought that colleges would do everything for adults, and the school board programs were looted and pillaged and transferred to colleges.

What has happened is that the adults in the province have told us, because they have knocked on the doors of the school boards, that colleges scare them. If they have not accomplished what they believe to be a decent elementary and secondary standard of education, they do not think they can cope with colleges. So the school board has been brought back into adult education since the late 1960s, largely by the pressure of the citizens themselves. Fortunately, most of the boards have been responsive. They have not turned them away.

Mr. Keyes: It is no different from what we find with some of the groups—and we have a number of them in our city—who do not want even the basic literacy courses taught in the school setting. They say that the schools still frighten them as much as they did when they failed when they first went through. We have quite a problem of being sure that we are locating literacy programs in storefront operations and plazas and so on.

Mrs. Dobell: But surely we are not in the business of telling an adult where the best place for that adult to learn is. That is one of the maturity rights that the adult will exercise. The adult should be able to choose: "Do I feel comfortable in a college? Do I feel comfortable in a storefront? Do I feel comfortable in a school?" There is no duplication of service because there is only that one adult. Either they have a class and warm bodies in it or they do not. One adult is not going to run around and be—there is not a duplication if all of them have a class full of people. There is just a choice by different people of different modes of service.

Madam Chairman: I believe Mr. Jackson has questions.

Mr. Jackson: Thank you, Madam Chairman. I would like to commend Jane and Alan for their leadership work in this whole area. My first series of questions has to do with the status of educating adults. Have we received an official response from the government as yet?

Mrs. Dobell: No, we have not, and I was amused to see that my name and Professor Lawton's name—because he did the cost study—appeared in the grant regulations. I should have had them framed and put on—

Dr. Thomas: A brand of immortality, is it not?

Mrs. Dobell: Yes; imagine being able to point that out. The minister said that he was giving only a four per cent increase to the amount that was the so-called 100 per cent figure for continuing ed and that this was not to be considered an answer to what he called the Lawton-Dobell report, but that report would be forthcoming. I would appreciate it if someone here could tell me when that answer will be coming because I have no idea.

Mr. Jackson: It is one of the questions I will be asking the minister on Thursday afternoon when he is present. It is one of many reports on which we are anxious to hear from the ministry when it will be released.

But am I to understand by your statement that the 3,000—

Mrs. Dobell: It is 2,000. It was 1,900 and it went up to 1,986 or so.

Mr. Jackson: But the level at which the government had agreed to fund all boards in Ontario was not a ceiling; it was just a level at which the government would fund and boards could exceed that.

Mrs. Dobell: Yes, that is correct.

Mr. Jackson: Professor Lawton expressed in his report the findings that the actual costs were far greater.

Mrs. Dobell: Far greater.

Mr. Jackson: Am I to understand that the regs for this year have allowed for a four per cent increase on the—

Mrs. Dobell: Yes, on the 1,900. It may be four and a half; I forget.

Mr. Jackson: Are we monitoring the uptake on those programs in any way through your association?

Mrs. Dobell: No. We, as an association, live in the back of the bus. We have trouble staying alive. We have no capability to do the kind of data-gathering work and monitoring that needs to be done. These are the kinds of things that I feel very strongly the Ministry of Education should be doing and should be publishing so that the debate can be based on whatever the realities are.

Mr. Jackson: I have been very concerned about how we have been using literacy programs

like a pinball machine in this province in terms of what ministry this year will be dealing with literacy. I am very excited about the things that are going on in education. They are not being exposed very effectively. You have given this committee a far greater insight into it than we have ever had on the floor of the Legislature or even in any announcements, so we appreciate that.

Could you give a little more clear direction in terms of how we are dealing with the literacy issue? I am very excited about the comment about evidence that educating the adult parent is having an effect on the child. If that does not strike to the core of what this committee is all about and, hopefully, what Radwanski was trying to get to, then I do not know what does.

I see that as being a very important issue. Mr. Johnston has raised it with respect to equal life opportunities and education and I cannot agree with him more. I want to hear something a little more clearly with respect to why we have the lead ministry—in my view, it is inappropriate, and I do not wish to put words in your mouth.

1620

Mrs. Dobell: Let me first pick up your comment about Radwanski. I felt very sorry and indeed angry that the Radwanski report, when discussing "The Dimensions of the Problem," on page 67, said: "We're talking about those people who leave the system without graduating. We're not paying any attention to the fact that a large percentage of them return." The whole notion of a stopout as opposed to a dropout Mr. Radwanski ignored. We have no statistics that I know of in the public domain in Ontario, let alone in Canada, but in the United States 40 per cent of those who drop out go back and a high percentage finish, but I cannot tell you about that.

Going back to the lead ministry, and then Alan I am sure wants to comment, you need an articulated policy in Ontario and we do not have one. If the Ministry of Education cleaned up its act in terms of goals, philosophy, policy, and defined the student and the rights and the obligations, then we could get on with our business. We are prevented from doing that by the fact that it is so vague and so contradictory that no one knows what the mission is and everybody wastes time arguing.

Dr. Thomas: In the 1986 ministry statistics there is a category called re-entrants, and in that year the number was half the number of dropouts. We do not know that they were the same people, but we do know that half the number who dropped out returned to the school

system in 1986. As Jane says, the American figures are very much better in terms of the fact that the Americans have discovered that something like 25 per cent to 30 per cent of those who go back actually finish.

However, one of the arguments we are making is that the achievement of a high school diploma is not the only measure of the success of the secondary school. There is a school not very far from here that has a very large number of Iranians in it at the moment. A number of those Iranians, better than half, have university experience from Iran. They are not interested in school-leaving certificates. They are interested in learning to read and write English because that is what they need to do. It would be, I think, quite wrong of us to judge the success of that school and of those people and judge them failures because they have not completed high school-leaving certificate.

One of the interesting bits of information we have comes from Sweden. As you may know, Sweden introduced a rule called the 25-4 rule in 1978, in which if you were 25 years of age and had four years of experience at work you were entitled to be admitted to university. What they found was a very large change in the nature of the university programs as a result of the introduction of those students. That is, they began to unravel the old progressive programs that went from year one to year two to year three to year four, which everybody was in, leading to a degree, and got a large number of students who were pursuing smaller and more specialized areas.

Again, it seems to me that we would be wrong to conclude that the university in Sweden was a failure because not all of those students proceeded to graduation. I do think that part of the messiness that Jane and I have been talking about is not only the need to see the need for the existence of more financial patterns within the secondary schools but also the need for more programs and more and different criteria of success and failure.

Mr. Jackson: This is my final question. Having spent 10 years as a trustee and nine years on the early school-leave program, it literally tore my heart out constantly dumping kids out. In one year, we dumped 92 children in Halton. These are 14-year-old and 15-year-old children we were dumping out into the market because we could no longer cope and they could no longer cope. I could not live with this.

I want to tie this into Jane's point about the day cycles, and there are other areas that surfaced. We sat down and developed a program, as

trustees, because we could not get the principal's support or the superintendent's support. We developed a trustees' linkage program in the schools. They thought we were crazy.

In semestered schools, we would try to save at least one or two credits. The principle was you build on strengths and kids. That was just my private sector experience, and I was trying to apply it to the school system. So with kids at risk, if they had written off five of their programs but there was one they were going to do well in, if we could save it we would link it and go out and get them jobs in the private sector.

Do you know what happened? All the high schools said, "We cannot provide the program at the same time every day." We had to take all of our kids, whether they were academically attuned or not, and put them into the vocational school end. We had to do a lot of counselling with the student to overcome his bias about going to a vocational school to save a credit.

With regard to the hurdles in the way we structure our schools in order to maintain this linkage, I agree with you that Radwanski did not do a lot in the area of time out. I happen to be a fan of the notion that when a child is at risk, you consider that as an option; but you do not send him out in the desert, you have some linkages. The school boards and the Education Act are reluctant to create those linkages. Adult education is a means back. There is also a level in there where we maintain a rather long educational umbilical cord to a child who is getting life experiences that can be worked out within the system.

You have brought some insights to this committee, albeit late in the game, but very close to when the minister will be here.

Mrs. Dobell: Good.

Mr. Jackson: I appreciate it very much, but I want to underscore the points you have made because they are refreshing, new and seldom raised. The way we organize our schools is the next phase. I do hope you will come back. I do not know if you are on the docket to come back.

Mrs. Dobell: We have not asked, but we easily could.

Dr. Thomas: We would like to return.

Mr. Jackson: If that is possible; because the structuring of schools is going to be very important in terms of how it mitigates against total family, adult education, the whole family experiencing it; as well as being able to do some of the innovative things in plant settings, which we are doing in Halton county using certified

teachers, which is another issue. I do not want to get into that, but I cannot understand why in this province we do not allow our high schools to have linkages with community colleges so that secondary school teachers, not instructors but those who teach, can go in and give a secondary school graduation diploma, but also can make sure they are teaching an equivalency and it is a real equivalency. Why do we have to do all of it within a high school?

Dr. Thomas: Mr. Jackson, it would be very helpful if you would contribute to the notion that the conventional phrase "bridging the gap" does not mean exclusively the gap from school to work. It also means the gap from work back to school.

Mr. Jackson: Yes.

Madam Chairman: I notice that the Coalition for Public Education has arrived, so in view of the fact that we do not want to keep our next presenters waiting too long, Mrs. O'Neill will be the last speaker on the list.

Mrs. O'Neill: Both of you have had much deeper experience in this area than I have had. I presume you have been following some of the presentations we have had. Because I have been involved with education, I have found some of the presentations rather harsh, in some cases with sweeping judgements. Most of those have been from people who are in business, so to speak, retailers—perhaps you saw that report in the press—today the Ontario Chamber of Commerce.

I know there is a very good experience in Ottawa, in the learning foundations. I also know there is one in North York. I am just wondering, however, because you have a much broader view than I, what the business community itself is willing to do about the complaints it is making regarding both the lack of literacy and numeracy, the two phrases we are hearing most.

You have pointed out very explicitly for us—I am very glad you have—and as Mr. Jackson stated given to us in great detail what the weaknesses are in the school system, but what kind of co-operation do you need from the business community? My experience, and it is very limited, has been that the school system has gone out to search for co-operation in the business community and not as often vice versa. Maybe that is a very limited view. Therefore, I am asking you, who have had broader experience. Certainly, you must have discussed this in some way in the survey.

Mrs. Dobell: Again, I would like to highlight the need for a very comprehensive look at this

question. I am aware of certain things on which I will speak, but I feel that you ought to be able to get answers to these questions from the Ministry of Education, because we are not in a position to gather data and have a provincial overview. This is one of the great lacks of the whole system in continuing ed, the lack of knowledge, the lack of data.

I believe that in areas like the city of York, where the board has unequivocally said that it is going to do this thing and that this is part of its mission—it has moved into that now—it has found excellent co-operation. It is a little bit the case of the board adopting the mission statement, the concept, the conviction; and then it moves and is able to do it. They find partners. In Hamilton too, it is proceeding because they are in a town where there is a great need in many of the industries there.

1630

What we are asking you to do is to clear up the ambiguity, to put it front and centre as part of the mission and to encourage boards to reach out in this area without someone saying, "Oh, that's peripheral." It is very debilitating at a school board level where you can see these opportunities and what happens in the boardroom is that people say: "That's none of our business. It's not part of our mandate. We don't have to do it. It is grace and favour. The Education Act is obscure. Who cares about adults? They're a bunch of bums who dropped out." Let's clear that up.

Mrs. O'Neill: You are totally convinced that if there is inactivity, it is on the side of educators and not on the side of the business community.

Mrs. Dobell: Oh, no, Yvonne, of course not. I am just saying it takes two to tango, but it does not help if those who are on the educational side are rent with division as to what their mandate is; and that is where we are today.

Dr. Thomas: There is some lack of experience. One of the great success areas of community colleges has been with their advisory committees. The community colleges have worked very hard to make those advisory committees functional, make them work, and that is partly because the community colleges got off on an entrepreneurial footing from the very beginning. Boards have really only begun to learn how to be entrepreneurial. They really have had no reason to learn. If your clients have to come to you and if the money comes to you as a head tax on the client, you do not have to go out after anybody.

Mrs. Dobell: You just clip coupons.

Dr. Thomas: You just open the doors and in they come, and then they go out the other end. You do not have to deal with the community. The colleges had to deal with their communities from the very beginning and they have some very good experience. I think boards could learn a lot from the experience of colleges of working with the very explicit program-by-program advisory committees.

In some they have not worked, but where the colleges have really worked on those committees and helped the college people learn how to function on them and taken them seriously, they have worked extremely well.

Mrs. O'Neill: Thank you for saying that on the record.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Let's hope we have other examples of governance from that level; however, I think some of the campus advisory committees say that the Toronto board presents much better examples of involving consumers than the entrepreneurial notion of going to the business community in an advisory capacity, which is part of the board of regents.

Mrs. Dobell: I would like to comment on the advisory committee, the last statement. At the Ottawa board, we have established an advisory committee on adult and continuing education, and we started off by thinking we were the greatest. After all, the stats showed we were pretty good.

They arrived and said: "Well, we don't think you're very good at all. We think the way you're trying to deliver literacy is a disaster. You're trying to push all the other community groups out, we have the impression, and that's a lousy idea."

After about a year of being worked over by them, our whole attitude and delivery system changed. It was not very pleasant, and we expected to be given flowers and bouquets and we were not, but certainly they turned us around.

Madam Chairman: I would like to thank your association for coming before us today and giving us your valuable insight on the continuing education spectrum.

Reverend McClintock, if you would like to bring forward your delegation for the Coalition for Public Education; once you are seated you could identify yourselves for purposes of Hansard.

COALITION FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

Mr. McClintock: Inside the brief you will see a sheet that gives the names of all the potential members of this delegation. With me at the table

are Kathleen Hunter, Dianne Meaghan and Keith McKean. Joining me at the table are John McGrath, Craig Cribar, and do you want to join us, Larry? So far, the eighth person, Eberhardt Schwantes, has not been able to come. We may have to accept his regrets.

Madam Chairman: I wonder if each member of the delegation could identify himself or herself separately, just for purposes of Hansard, so they know exactly who is speaking.

Mr. McClintock: George McClintock.

Ms. Hunter: Kathleen Hunter.

Ms. Meaghan: Dianne Meaghan.

Archdeacon McKean: Keith McKean.

Mr. McGrath: John McGrath.

Mr. McClintock: The four of us at the microphone will be doing the actual presentation. Then when it comes to the discussion, John and Craig, we hope, may be involved.

I understand there is some pressure of time. I would like our whole brief to go into the record even though we might not say every word that is here. In order to speed things along a little, I suggest to the members of the select committee, as I express our appreciation for your willingness to hear us, that you turn to page 3. Pages 1 to 3 give something more of a background to our general interest in the idea of a royal commission on education and then the formation of the select committee.

In order that you may appreciate who we are and what we seek for public education, we would remind you that we are a province-wide coalition, representative of widely based religious and educational groups that are dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the public schools, elementary and secondary, as the paramount system of education, accessible to all citizens of Ontario and used by the great majority of them.

We want to maintain its health and viability, so we have a great concern that adequate capital and program funding be ensured for the foreseeable future.

We are dedicated to the preservation and development of a harmonious, nondiscriminatory, socioeconomic environment in Ontario where those going through our educational system may find dignified and meaningful employment opportunities, no matter what their backgrounds may be.

We wish to encourage all measures to improve the public education system of Ontario, which we proudly acknowledge to be among the best in the world. We want to preserve it and enhance it

so that future generations of Ontarians and Canadians may continue to benefit from it.

It is our intention during this submission to discuss the following questions and subjects in this order:

1. How should a true consensus on educational philosophy, goals and means of achieving them be developed by the people of Ontario?

2. What are the inclusions and exclusions, if any, to what is termed in Mr. Conway's motion "the formal elementary and secondary school system in Ontario," and what are their immediate and long-term implications?

3. What shall or should be the nature of the vision for Ontario society for which elementary and secondary education systems should be preparing those entrusted to their care?

4. What limitations do external factors impose upon the educational system and what responsibility may it be expected to achieve?

5. What factors ought to be considered in the development and implementation of suitable educational policies for the future?

We have taken seriously the invitation in your letter of a review of the education philosophy in Ontario and the fundamental goals as they relate to the equal life chances and full development of each student.

I will address item 1; Kathleen Hunter, item 2; Keith McKean, item 3; Dianne Meaghan, item 4; and then Dianne and I will deal with item 5. As time permits we have other things, but these are the main points we would like to set before you.

Establishment of consensus: Historically in Ontario and elsewhere in Canada, educational policy decisions tend to have been made for political and financial reasons much more frequently than for their contributions to high-quality education. Thus, however fine and good the educational philosophy of the province of Ontario may appear to be, practical decisions about its implementation are very strongly influenced by politicians' perceptions of who and how many want it and how it can be paid for.

1640

It would seem advisable, to assume the kind of widely based public support necessary to ensure adequate and appropriate funding, that the public, or at least the attentive public, be thoroughly involved not only in the making of submissions to this select committee and to the government of Ontario, as this select committee permits. Accordingly, a concerted effort should be made through widely circulated and debated position papers to refine any recommendations upon the merits and priority values before any

legislation or regulation based upon them is drafted or enacted.

The Coalition for Public Education is convinced that meaningful consensus building, especially in a democracy, can only take place after a thorough ventilation of the issue to be resolved. It cannot exist if one individual or group declares to the others what he or she or they have decided ought to be done. If our society is to grow and develop democratically, any unilateral, authoritarian order in council, laws, regulations or decrees which must be obeyed willy-nilly whether by reasons of state, church or any institution or individual, ought to be vigorously protested and resisted by those who have any appreciation of what democratic responsible government should be.

Dictatorship, no matter how paternally benevolent it may appear to be, should have absolutely no place in Ontario and Canada now, or ever in the future. Therefore, we recommend that a fully responsible consensus building process, agreeable to the people of Ontario, be developed and used consistently to create a genuine province-wide consensus prior to the enactment of any measures likely to affect significantly any educational policies or practices in Ontario.

Ms. Hunter: The next question we have is that the extent of "the formal elementary and secondary school system" in Ontario appears to require some clarification. This quote was from the notice we received. Should it be understood to refer only to the traditional public school system as it existed up to the passage of Bill 30 legislation, or does it now by implication, as publicly funded, refer to the separate schools in the province?

There seems to be quite a bit of ambiguity in terms. Since the Ministry of Education has responsibilities vis-à-vis the accreditation, etc., of private and independent schools in Ontario, should they be understood to be included as well? If it is still—if it ever was as Premier Davis's statement implied—Ministry of Education policy as well as that of the government of Ontario that "the strength of Ontario's educational heritage rests in the general merit and value of a universally accessible, publicly supported school system," which we of the Coalition for Public Education contend ought to be publicly accountable as well, then there remains much unfinished business to work through.

Here I think there are some rather long sentences that might be difficult if read out. What is the distinction? How should we refer to public schools? If we say the public schools of the

province, are we looking at all of the public schools and does every citizen in Ontario have a duty to concern herself or himself with both school systems? I think that has to be thought about carefully because there is much terminology bandied around publicly and it is not certain who is referring to what.

Therefore, we recommend that all publicly funded or provincially accredited school or school systems within Ontario be obligated, by law, to honour section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, without restriction, and that failure to comply with it bring with it loss of public funding as well as the other penalties of the law.

Archdeacon McKean: Number three is the vision that the Coalition for Public Education has of the future for Ontario education.

The futurologists cannot provide an exact picture of what Ontario, Canada or the world may be like one, two, three generations or more hence. Children enrolled in kindergarten this fall may expect, if they survive, to be graduating at the end of this 20th century or the beginning of the 21st century. The trends indicate that they will continue to face problems at least as difficult as those faced by students who left their secondary school careers behind them this June.

Will they have any more hope of influencing their world positively than those graduates of 1988, who will quickly learn the limited value of their diploma in a world of work undergoing a difficult transition from our industrial and post-industrial society to a new and challenging but as yet unknown future? What will they be able to do in a post-Meech Lake or post-free-trade Canada, in a world troubled with rapidly depleting primary resources, running out of energy reserves, beleaguered by increasing pollution and mounting debt?

How will they be able to cope with the economic and health care needs of a retired group greatly increasing in proportion to the number of those who are coming into the work flow? How will they manage to cope with the increasingly difficult family and social problems? There are at least two responsible things we can do now:

1. Try to reduce the inventory of problems we transmit to them by taking more creative and costly actions to remedy those we can do something about now; and

2. Try to ensure that they are equipped with the best education possible to develop each one's human potential to its highest.

Alvin Toffler, in *Future Shock*, suggests that an education adequate to prepare one for the

future requires that one learns to learn, learns to relate and learns to choose. We would add that it would also enable one to act upon these learnings, relationships and value decisions and to take appropriate initiatives.

Our society has not all the answers. It does not even begin to ask all the questions which ought to be asked. Nevertheless, we know a lot more, and better, about the solutions to our problems than we are ready to attempt to apply at present. Not only our young people but each of us needs to be challenged to share an idealistic yet pluralistic vision of the kind of Ontario we hope to build together in the next century.

Would it not be wonderful if, in response to the question, "Is there any place you'd rather be?" the answer would be a definite and enthusiastic "no" because we have been co-operating successfully to make Ontario a far better and more hospitable environment than it is today? Therefore, we in the coalition recommend that the people and government of Ontario work together for practical and humane solutions to the social and other problems afflicting our society and that ways and means of assisting in this process become and be made an integral part of our educational programs.

Ms. Meaghan: I am going to talk about external factors limiting the success of education. There continues to be a widespread tendency to be highly critical of the products of formal elementary and secondary education, as well as some of the undesirable experiences endured by those in the process of being educated.

At the same time, there appears to be a reluctance to admit, if not a blindness to acknowledge, the effects of external forces upon those going to school. Thus, the Radwanski report attributes little of the poor success rates of the schools, including the dropout problem, to other external forces, agencies or institutions, and appears to make its recommendation without due regard to the socioeconomic context in which the school system, teachers, and students especially, struggle continually.

Our society needs to keep trying to provide meaningful living and working conditions to motivate its members, not least of all, those who do not find much relevant relationship between what they are doing in school and the opportunities perceptibly or practically available to them when they leave. A child's interactions during the school day rarely represent more than one half of its waking hours, excluding weekends and holidays. What can a teacher really do about a

child whose parents are unable or who refuse to deal responsibly with its personal attitude and behaviour problem or to co-operate in seeking appropriate remedial treatment?

What can a teacher do about the chronically pressured, overstressed child whose parents place unreasonable demands upon it? What can the school do about chronic malnutrition, child abuse and child neglect? It may be able to palliate, but rarely does it have the resources, including wide community support and sanction, to effect more than a temporary alleviation of the oppressive situations which the student may be struggling to survive.

The street kids are much more likely to be symptomatic of a sick home and societal situation than to be the result of a flawed educational process only. The elementary system, from kindergarten onwards, has to try to salvage the victims of all sorts of incredible living conditions which impair their opportunities for equal life chances and full development.

1650

What should be done about the disturbed child of a disturbed home situation who consistently interferes with the learning process of others and actually may endanger classmates with antisocial and pathological behaviour? What can the elementary teacher, already taxed with the variety of demands of a class of students, do to help meet the real needs of the disadvantaged? This includes the children of refugees and immigrants who appear suddenly in class, with hardly a word of English or French, yet are somehow expected to become fully acclimatized to Canada and Canadian education yesterday, if not sooner.

In the face of the continual struggle to meet the needs of these children without adequate resources and personnel, money and materials, it is remarkable that the schools, elementary in particular, succeed as well as they do.

We therefore recommend that top priority, through the allocation of realistically effective resources to the elementary schools especially, be given towards the remediation of those conditions which hinder a child's effective education and that society at large be obliged to examine and rectify those causes for which these educational and personal problems may be symptomatic.

Mr. McClintock: Continuing with factors to be considered in the development and implementation of suitable educational policies for the future, the questions of who profits and who ought to profit from education, and why and

how, are worthy of careful consideration. Historically, the profit of the persons to be educated and their future wellbeing and that of the society to which they belong have all too often been sacrificed to various vested interest groups—educational, ecclesiastical, economic and political. Too often those involved in the educational process, especially the children and young people, are used and exploited in the interest of individuals and groups that derive, or hope to derive, significant advantage from products of the educational system processed to meet their specifications.

There is always a tension between those who would turn education into a factory to mould and fabricate humanoids to serve their interests and those who would like to see each person attain as close to his or her true human potential as possible through a process of cultivation and growth, without prejudice to their becoming their own best persons.

It is relevant to refer to the comments of Bertrand Russell, one of the 20th-century British philosophers, on the subject:

"Education is, as a rule, the strongest force on the side of what exists and against fundamental change: threatened institutions, while they are still powerful, possess themselves of the educational machine, and instil a respect for their own excellence into the malleable minds of the young. Reformers retort by trying to oust their opponents from their position of vantage. The children themselves are not considered by either party; they are merely so much material, to be recruited into one army or the other. If the children themselves were considered, education would not aim at making them belong to this party or that, but at enabling them to choose intelligently between the parties; it would aim at making them able to think, not at making them think what their teachers think. Education as a political weapon could not exist if we respected the rights of children. If we respected the rights of children, we should educate them so as to give them the knowledge and mental habits required for forming independent opinions; but education as a political institution endeavours to form habits and to circumscribe knowledge in such a way as to make one set of opinions inevitable."

Ms. Meaghan: The Coalition for Public Education recognizes that the educational process is one which ought to and does continue, both formally and informally, all through life. It has been said, wisely, that the education of a child ought to commence at least 20 years before it is born. This testifies to the great influence

which parents have upon the development of their children.

It is widely acknowledged that the child nurtured by mature, loving and responsible parents or guardians in a culturally enriched environment normally has a significant head start over the one born into a culturally impoverished, emotionally and educationally limiting one. These advantages tend to continue influential throughout life.

The publicly funded elementary and secondary school systems, however, defined as "inclusive" or "exclusive," are rarely able to compensate students adequately for all the limitations of their backgrounds. However, in so far as public policies and priorities may permit, the coalition contends that persons of all ages, states and stages should be encouraged and enabled to participate in any program of self-improvement and/or upgrading which they can be motivated and liberated from job, family or other responsibilities to undertake.

We recognize the special educational functions of such publicly funded entities as TVOntario, the CBC and Ryerson Polytechnical Institute's CJRT and acknowledge their significance and values over and above the information-giving and attitude-moulding activities of the various electronic and print media which constitute part of the wider context in which both elementary and secondary education take place.

We recognize the significance of the provision of adequate day care for all who need it or might benefit from it. It is a socioeconomic-political challenge to be met by Ontarians and Canadians in making the elementary educational program, especially, more completely accessible and productive for those it should serve. We see the growing need for post-secondary educational programs universally accessible, which means public funding and subsidies, where necessary, to enable all citizens, without distinction or discrimination, to improve themselves and their job qualifications for their own advantage and just as significantly for the greater wellbeing of all our society.

Delinquency, school dropouts, escalating welfare costs, increasing social problems, including rising crime rates, are usually symptomatic of a society many of whose members are unable to cope with life and without a sense of meaning or purpose for it. While better education alone is not a panacea for these conditions, it can make significant improvements in many cases and help to reduce their social and economic costs to society.

We have sketched some of this larger context before trying to address some of the broad but limiting issues cited in the terms of reference for the select committee. Each of them could stimulate research reports and recommendations far beyond our or your scope to deal with realistically at this point. The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education has produced well-researched reports on many subjects related to your terms of reference. If you have not already secured a collation and/or a digest of them for use by the select committee, it could be very helpful to do so as soon as possible.

If there is any expectation of a genuine consensus-building process being undertaken, it would make good educational and political sense to have such materials, upon which so many public resources have been invested already, made available in forms suitable for public discussion.

Such books as *From Quantitative to Qualitative Change in Ontario Education*, OISE, 1976, part 5, edited by Garnet McDiarmid; *The Learning Society—Report of the Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario—OISE*, 1972, part 6; and *Alternative Futures for Ontario Schools and Some Implications for Performance Appraisal Systems*, a report funded under the Ministry of Education, Queen's Printer, 1986, section 7, provide a few suggestions. Other relevant material is available on both Ontario and Canadian future proposals and all of this without tapping into the vast resources of American, British and world experiences.

We recommend that a digest be compiled forthwith of the research reports and their proposals already made through the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and related agencies which are or may be considered relevant to the terms of reference of this select committee on education and that this compilation be made readily available to the Ontario public as a material resource to assist the dialogical and consensus-building process which ought to take place before establishing new policies or amending existing policies likely to affect the future of education in Ontario.

Archdeacon McKean: What consensus, if any, exists on the criteria for successful transition of young students to adulthood in Ontario? Should they be mainly negatives such as, "He/she has managed not to become addicted to mood modifiers, not to cause an unwanted pregnancy, not to be convicted of a criminal offence," etc., or should they be expressed in more positive terms such as, "He or she has

managed to acquire certain vocational skills and certain sociopolitical attitudes and certain personal insights and values which make it more likely that he or she will turn out to be a good citizen, a loving partner, a caring parent, a useful employee, a credit to his or her profession"?

In the observation of the coalition, no such consensus has yet been adequately developed and defined. Until this happens, it is unlikely that the educational system, elementary or secondary, is going to have widespread success in producing people who meet the expectations, both those who want a usable product at lowest bottom-line costs and those who also want the best human beings to build a better society for the future.

1700

The Coalition for Public Education, therefore, regards education as an investment capable of producing rich dividends for our future society, rather than as an operating expense which must be kept as cost-effective as possible to keep us ahead of our competitors elsewhere.

It is encouraging to note that due recognition, if not due weight, has been accorded to the fact that the elementary and secondary school system exists within a multicultural and multiracial society. One of the implied objectives is to equip those who are schooled to make their lives as well as their livelihoods in Ontario and Canada.

Our society promises to become increasingly pluralistic in the future, and it would be helpful to those who are citizens to be personally acquainted with at least some of the value systems of their neighbours and to take them into consideration, as well as those of their own ethnic and spiritual heritages, in dealing with the resolution of public issues.

The subject of manners, methods and modes for developing understanding, appreciation and application of the variety of value systems operating in our society will be addressed in the coalition submission during the phase 2 sessions of the select committee.

For the present, we would emphasize that the development and maintenance of a harmonious pluralistic society, composed of our rich cultural mosaic and drawing on the heritage of each for the benefit of all, would be best secured by elementary and secondary educational systems scrupulously diligent to assure that no trace of discrimination can be found within them. This would include all those varieties referred to in section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Thus, any educational institution which appears in any way to be fostering an enclave mentality which tends to upgrade we/us at the expense and to the detriment of they/them would be perceived to be operating contrary to the educational philosophies and policies of Ontario and would be required, through appropriate sanctions, where necessary, to rectify its antisocial behaviour.

Partisan candour may generate enthusiasm and energy to bring out some of the highest performance potentials in students and educational institutions. Working to improve one's own performance in competition to better one's previous best can indeed be productive.

Nevertheless, the kind of competition which leads to invidious comparisons with other students, schools or educational systems has no proper place in Ontario. The archaic, though still prevalent, notion that one may appropriately enhance one's own self-image at the expense of putting others down is one that educational policies and programs should strive to render permanently obsolete as quickly as possible.

Ms. Hunter: It becomes clear to many of those who try to track what actually becomes of the job seekers who emerge from the elementary and secondary school systems that there are intractable forces operating in society which frequently frustrate schools and students in shaping and fulfilling career and work objectives. Whenever emergence, if not always graduation, to the world of work occurs, students may find themselves under-equipped to compete for the jobs available or over-qualified and also ineligible and noncompetitive.

Transitions in the job market lead to alternations of scarcity and glut, with the problems each brings to the economy and society. Often they provide tragic limitations to the careers and lives of the people at the late secondary and post-secondary educational stages. Many of those who fail or drop out can perceive neither practical career prospects to match their inclinations and aptitudes nor sufficient opportunities to motivate their self-preparations.

If they enter the employment/career market with the preparations recommended at the time they made their course commitments, they often find the job market opportunities have changed so significantly since then that they have undertaken training for jobs that are now obsolete. Their hopes and expectations have not been adequately related to reality and, with bitter disappointment, they perceive themselves cheated out of a meaningful future.

Not all of these problems can be remedied by better-qualified teachers or guidance counselors, although those with a strong future orientation may help to salvage some of them.

In a society where status, success and acceptable self-images are so closely tied to the nature of one's life work and to the extent of one's disposable income, it is readily appreciable why it is so discouraging for those at or below the poverty line. They encounter little prospect of meaningful employment adequately paid for or practical incentives to keep up the struggle to provide themselves and any children they may have with a manageable and purposeful future.

The personal problems directly related to disadvantaged earning power develop a kind of feedback effect. This tends to amplify the same and related problems in their families and in our society of the future. One-parent families struggling to survive on minimum-wage work or welfare are often the role models that some young children grow up with. In spite of equality-of-opportunity legislation and some enlightened policies, young women are more often hampered and discouraged than young men in their search for meaningful careers that will also permit them to have and rear children.

A very positive set of contributions towards the career and work objectives of those who have not been able to follow the more conventional secondary school system and programs is made by the provision of an imaginative alternate form. The alternate secondary education of the Scarborough Board of Education is one such program. There, creative faculty members work in liberated conditions which enable them to address the needs of their students much more consistently each term. ASE and other enlightened programs similar to it in other jurisdictions may provide for a more personally tailored program for each student. This can help them to make much more of their unique personalities, gifts and situations than they might otherwise make.

The Coalition for Public Education would recommend that high priority be given to provision of adequate alternate secondary education programs designed to meet many of the more personal needs of the students, including those specified in the Bill 82 legislation, everywhere in Ontario.

Mr. McClintock: I think at this point we could terminate the presentation of this paper. You may read the statement from the prophet and meditate upon it yourselves. Perhaps now if you

have comments to make or questions to address to us, we will do our best to meet you.

Mr. Keyes: I think the question was asked at the very beginning by the delegation that there was a lack of clarity in the terms of reference for the committee when it spoke of referring to the elementary and secondary system in Ontario. I think our role is quite clear. We are not restricting this review to the public system whatsoever, but it is definitely to the two publicly funded systems that exist in the province. When we refer to elementary and secondary education—and I want the chairman to correct me if I am wrong—it is my understanding that we are not looking at one system, we are looking at the systems of education.

Mr. McClintock: Where does independent and private school education fit in, or does it?

Mr. Keyes: They are not publicly funded; therefore, they are not directly in the terms of reference of the committee. We are looking at the philosophy of education in general. We have had presentations from all the independent schools, the Jewish schools, the Christian schools and their pleas for funding. They have all appeared before us this week.

I think we have to look at our system of education that is there. I just felt that maybe that was a misconception in your mind, or were you just asking the question and looking for a response?

Mr. McClintock: We wanted it clarified, so it is absolutely unambiguous.

Madam Chairman: I certainly think Mr. Keyes has done that from the committee's point of view. In fact, we are not going to focus totally on elementary and secondary, but as you may have noticed from the presentations in the past two weeks, we are also looking at the post-secondary and the continuing education spectrums.

Mr. Reyecraft: Just before we go on, I am not sure if Mr. Keyes meant to imply that there was no relevance in the work of this committee to the independent schools of the province. I do not think you intended to imply that.

Mr. Keyes: No.

Mr. Reyecraft: Certainly, there are some aspects of the committee's work that will have a direct application to those schools. For example, in the fall when we are looking at the Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions document, there are implications around that which would have an impact on the independent schools as well.

Mr. Keyes: I accept that. I just wanted to be sure that the delegation did not think we were looking at one system here. It seemed to me they felt we should be looking at one system. That would be enhanced by their statement that they feel the role of the government should be to maintain the paramountcy of the public system. I think we have to face the fact that today it is a reality that we now fund—and the goal is equity—two systems. Therefore, I question the statement that you feel the role of the government should be to maintain the paramountcy of one system over the other. I think that is now gone past and we have to accept the fact that we are attempting to provide equity in those systems for which we assume the responsibility. You may want to comment on that later because I really question that can be our role now that we have accepted the other philosophy.

1710

The whole idea of general consensus building that you talk about is an interesting one to do, but I think from some practical experiences it cannot always be done. I have had some limited experience in that. I used to feel that I governed at a municipal level on a consensus-building basis and had a fair amount of success with it. When you get into this forum in a much expanded system, it is much more difficult to arrive at consensus.

I think back to a previous ministry for which I was responsible where for about some 15 years the administration of that ministry had tried to gain a general consensus from the constituents for which they are responsible in the matter of revising the Fire Departments Act. After 15 years and five drafts of legislation, they never gained what they considered sufficient consensus in order to enact legislation. It is my contention that in this business you attempt to involve in dialogue, as we are doing in this committee, as much of the public as possible with their ideas. But then it becomes the responsibility of government through its leadership to provide legislation as best it sees fit, having the information brought to it from as many sources as possible.

If we attempted to wait on every issue in education until a general consensus was formed from the public, we would still be back with Egerton Ryerson. I appreciate that sometimes legislation may be enacted that the public may feel it has not had adequate input upon and, therefore, I accept that we should do our utmost to be sure we inform the public—through, as you have said, papers regardless of colour—about

what some of the issues are that are to be debated and which legislation will come forward. I just want to get those two views across there.

The only other one is that the brief seemed to change. Maybe it was my attitude or something, but as I started through your brief, I felt it had a general negative connotation to it because you consistently referred to "problems." I have tried in my vocabulary to get rid of that word and use only the word "challenges." "Problem" to me indicates that there is only one side to it; it is a problem and there it is. I look at a challenge as something that is using the whole brain vision of yesterday. In that way, not only do we recognize an issue, but we try to look at a resolution to it as well.

You did improve it. At first, it seemed to have only problems there and many of those that you try to get society to correct before the educational system will do something. As to the realities of trying to correct all those, we never will. We are never going to get rid of the single-parent families and all of those other poverties in housing. We work on them slowly, but we cannot wait in the educational system until they are all corrected.

These are more comments than a direct question to you, but I would like to hear some more comments about maintaining the paramountcy of one system over the other.

Mr. McClintock: Referring to the order of Mr. Conway that the select committee, etc., within one calendar year, report on the role of the formal elementary and secondary school system—it was not "systems" in the order. That was a point we felt needed to be clarified as we go on and as the province proceeds.

As to the things that we have been working for, what we have understood prior to Bill 30 to be the public school system, we would like to see in the two publicly funded systems full accessibility and we would like to see nondiscriminatory treatment of all students and teachers. It seems that the law of the province and the Constitution of Canada provide for certain inequalities, certain discriminatory things, but as far as possible, in so far as education is publicly responsible, publicly accountable and publicly funded, it should be accessible to all the people all the time, without discrimination. That is really, I think, a major point with us. We realize it may not be practically so, but a public system that is open to all at all times is what we want to preserve. Maybe some of my colleagues would like to comment too.

Ms. Hunter: I would like to comment on the fact that we are talking about equity and public funding. Equity has to do with fairness, and it has always been the idea that anything that was public was open to everyone. This is one of the great difficulties and this is why in the section that I read I brought up what we are talking about when we say that. If we are talking about the public system in Ontario, is it both systems? If it is both systems and it is public, it is somewhat of an oxymoron if it is not accessible to everyone. If what happens in it and how programs develop are not the subject of discussion by all of us, then how can it be public?

Mr. Keyes: I think your interpretation is the difference between "publicly funded" and "public system." We have two publicly funded systems of education, one that we have chosen—maybe we will have to change the word—to call "public" and one that is separate. I think that is the definition we will have to use.

Ms. Hunter: Medieval theologians would love you.

Madam Chairman: I think Mr. Reycraft has a brief supplementary and then, if you do not mind, we will go on with Mr. Villeneuve since we have technically run out of time.

Mr. Reycraft: I just have a comment that I think the reference to the committee was very clear in that it talked about the formal elementary and secondary school system. The word "public" was not used in the reference at all.

Madam Chairman: The closing line of that mandate, I believe, was "and any other matter that the committee sees fit," which kind of gave us a very broad mandate indeed.

Mr. Villeneuve: Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for your presentation. I will repeat one sentence here and I would like you to expand on it. It sounds like elitism to me in one or the other system:

"The archaic though still prevalent notion that one may appropriately enhance one's own self-image at the expense of putting others down is one that educational policies and programs should strive to render permanently obsolete as quickly as possible."

Could you state some examples?

Mr. McClintock: In the heat of the Bill 30 discussions, I was given what I have here as a clipping from a Niagara newspaper:

"Better System: Everyone knows that the Roman Catholic private school system is a much better system than the regular public school system. Graduates from the private, religious

system become outstanding citizens in the province. In fact, the province would have much less crime if it made the Roman Catholic faith the official state religion. Thank goodness Vince Kerrio, a very fair-minded man, believes in the full funding of the Roman Catholic school system. Signed, JN."

It is laughable at this point, but that attitude continues and there are people who say, "Well, it is obviously a much better system, with a better product coming out," and so on. We are saying that this is arrant nonsense and this sort of thing really ought to have no place in the experiences of the students, in the attitudes of the teachers or certainly in the attitude of the public. This is just a small sample, but this is the sort of thing we are getting at.

Mr. Villeneuve: I think that was possibly articulated this morning by some of our native people, who made a very real plea to this committee to look after some of the major problems that are facing them. That is probably part and parcel of what you speak of.

Madam Chairman: I would like to thank the coalition for appearing before us today.

1720

Archdeacon McKean: I have just one comment to Mr. Keyes, on the other question he raised, that we are not going to get rid of one-parent families and so on. There is no suggestion that we think we are going to get rid of one-parent families or poverty. It seems to me that it is up to the system to look at these concerns, somehow or other, more adequately. It should not be said, as I think the Radwanski report sort of suggested, that all the problems in this are due to the public school system, but rather to the wider question that somehow the whole system has to be looked at in terms of dealing with these questions, understanding they are a reality and asking how we best deal with them.

Mr. Cribar: I want to make a response too, to a couple of things that were said. We seem to get wrapped up in semantics all the time when we are talking about matters on which a committee is listening to something. You are reading someone else's motion and the semantics get fouled up. Sometimes we get pulled away to that argument, and I really do not want that to happen, because I feel the whole future welfare of this province is at stake in the educational system. If we do not have an educational system that provides the kinds of citizens who can carry on what this province is all

about, then we will not have a province. That is my major concern.

We are talking about two publicly funded systems. I do not care whether you are talking about their being different languages, different colours, different faiths, whatever, but the province has a moral responsibility and a mandate, I believe, to establish one educational philosophy. That educational philosophy, with a lot of things in it, must have within it that the young people of this province will have the right, and indeed will be given every possible chance, to develop themselves as human beings in order that they may contribute to the future of this province, because we want it to continue to exist.

That is the kind of philosophy we ought to be establishing. We should not be establishing that one is better than the other because it has more discipline or because it teaches something the other one does not. I could talk from my own point of view about why I do not think it is any better, but I will not do that.

I spent 11 years as a trustee on a public school board and felt that there were a lot of improvements made, but there still need to be a lot made now. It has to do with basic philosophy. We have got away from it. The purpose of our system of education is really what we are talking about here. We must get back to the basics of saying, "This is the purpose," and the purpose is to build Ontario into a place that will give all people equal opportunity to be human beings and to do what they want to do in the best way they can.

The other thing that you were talking about—appearing to be a little bit negative—is funny because what you said is what I thought we said. We have said that you cannot emphasize one side; you cannot blame the school system for all the problems we have. There are other external factors. The challenge is that we set up a philosophy of education which will allow others to participate with us to solve those problems. Educators do not have all the answers, even though they may tell you so.

What we are really saying in our brief is that we, as citizens of this province, should have enough concern about the future and about the children of this province to see that all aspects of the problem are treated and that a solution is found to overcome the difficulties teachers meet in classrooms. We know they are there; we are not looking at them one-sidedly. What we are trying to say is let's look at all sides and let's come up with a solution that will allow people to move forward.

There are a lot of personal things that I could relate about students who have not been able to express themselves, who have fallen through the cracks of our society and who are now a burden upon our society, simply because that is where we put them, through our educational system and the lack of looking at the problem in all directions. I hope we will see from this that we are trying to develop a philosophy of education which is public and does have universal aspects to it, and that no one is allowed to go around saying, "We're better than you are."

Madam Chairman: Thank you for those comments. I think you will find that a lot of the members agree with many of the comments you just made. I think we are looking for a universal philosophy as opposed to one that might be directed to one system, whether it be private, public, separate or whatever. I think that is what we are all reaching for. Thank you for your participation today.

The committee adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

CONTENTS

Tuesday, July 26, 1988

Philosophy and Goals of Education	E-357
Ontario Metis and Aboriginal Association	E-357
Ontario Separate School Trustees' Association	E-368
Council of Ontario Universities	E-376
Afternoon sitting	E-384
Ontario Chamber of Commerce	E-384
Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations Inc.	E-392
Ontario Association for Continuing Education	E-400
Coalition for Public Education	E-410
Adjournment	E-420

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Chairman: Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)

Vice-Chairman: Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)

Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)

Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)

Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)

Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)

Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)

Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)

O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)

Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)

Substitution:

Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L) for Mr. Miclash

Clerk: Mellor, Lynn

Staff:

Gardner, Dr. Robert J. L., Assistant Chief, Legislative Research Service

Porter, Ann, Research Officer, Legislative Research Service

Witnesses:

From the Ontario Metis and Aboriginal Association:

Recollet, Charles, President

Wetelainen, Henry, First Vice-President, Ontario Metis and Non-Status Indians

Weaver, Harold, Education Research Specialist

Bjornaa, Olaf, Second Vice-President

From the Ontario Separate School Trustees' Association:

Gagné, Omer J., President

Curran, Catherine, Chairman, Legislative Planning Committee

Nyitrai, Ernest F., Executive Director

Fobert, Rolland, Consultant

From the Council of Ontario Universities:

Monahan, Dr. Edward J., Executive Director

Clarke, G. Grant, Deputy to the Executive Director

From the Ontario Chamber of Commerce:

Brophey, Peter M., President

Reid, Tennys, Chairperson, Education Committee

Clemens, Jack, Member, Education Committee

Rehor, Elaine, Assistant General Manager

From the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations Inc.:

Bawden, Mary, President

Perks, Bev, Second Executive Vice-President

Purvis, Jan, First Executive Vice-President

From the Ontario Association for Continuing Education:

Dobell, C. Jane, Chairperson, Task Force on the Implications of the Education Amendment Act, 1986, for Adult Continuing Education; Trustee, Ottawa Board of Education

Thomas, Dr. Alan, Member, Steering Committee, Task Force on the Implications of the Education Amendment Act, 1986, for Adult Continuing Education; Professor, Department of Adult Education, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

From the Coalition for Public Education:

McClintock, George, President and Co-ordinator

Hunter, Kathleen, Treasurer; Executive Director, Canadian Unitarian Council

Meaghan, Dianne, Ontario Socialists to Preserve Public Education

McKean, Keith, Anglican Representative

McGrath, John, Baptist Convention Representative

Cribar, Craig, Presbyterian Representative



No. E-10

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Select Committee on Education

Philosophy and Goals of Education

First Session, 34th Parliament

Wednesday, July 27, 1988

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario
Editor of Debates: Peter Brannan

CONTENTS

Contents of the proceedings reported in this issue of Hansard appears at the back, together with a list of the members of the committee and other members and witnesses taking part.

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues can be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at (416) 965-2159.

Hansard subscription price is \$16.00 per session, from: Sessional Subscription Service, Information Services Branch, Ministry of Government Services, 5th Floor, 880 Bay Street, Toronto, M7A 1N8. Phone (416) 965-2238.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Wednesday, July 27, 1988

The committee met at 10:06 a.m. in room 151.

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS OF EDUCATION (continued)

Madam Chairman: I recognize a quorum, so we will get started. This session of the select committee on education will again be dealing with the goals and philosophy of education. This morning we are privileged to have a large group with us from the Alliance for Children-Ontario. They will be dealing with matters pertaining to the Provincial Parent Association of Children with Special Needs. Welcome, and welcome Margaret Walker. I assume you would like to introduce your group or have them introduce themselves.

ALLIANCE FOR CHILDREN-ONTARIO

Mrs. Walker: Yes, I would. If I could begin, then I will introduce them part-way through, if that is OK with the committee; or would you prefer that I introduce everyone?

Madam Chairman: The only problem is if they speak, Hansard would like to know at the time, if there is any interjection.

Mrs. Walker: OK. I believe you have a list of the people who should be here representing the various associations, so I will go through that list at the present time and introduce them. You will then have an idea who they are. We do not have the person who was on our committee from the Down Syndrome Associations of Ontario with us today, but it is Roslyn Vincent. She was involved in the preparation of this report.

I will ask the people to stand. Jill Cowie is with the Easter Seal Society. Diana Findlay is with Epilepsy Ontario. Eva Nichols is with the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario. I am here actually wearing two hats today. I am the president of the Alliance for Children, but I am also here representing the Association for Bright Children.

May Ann Welsh is from the Ontario Association for Community Living. I am not sure that anyone has arrived yet from the Ontario Federation for the Cerebral Palsied, but we hope Charlotte Harris will be joining us this morning. June Beeby and Heather Donnelly are both here from the Ontario Friends of Schizophrenics.

Lynn Ziraldo is here, and she is the president of the Provincial Parent Association Advisory Committee on Special Education Advisory Committees—a long title.

Madam Chairman: Would you like to go through that one again?

Mrs. Walker: In other words, PAAC. If we refer to PAAC, it refers to Lynn.

Mr. Mahoney: I would like to know who put the letters on the the letterhead.

Mrs. Walker: Bonnie Charbonneau and Margaret Chiamida are here from the Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario. Vera Malec is not here yet, but she will be here representing Views for the Visually Impaired. Rosemary Pryde is here from Voice for Hearing Impaired Children. As you can see, we represent quite a variety of parent associations and children with exceptionalities.

I would like very much to thank you for this opportunity to come together and present to the select committee today. The Alliance for Children is an organization which promotes communication and co-operation among many of the parent associations, voluntary service agencies and boards of education within the province. It is one of our privileges to be able to bring groups like this together to present. The development of the brief that you have is a collaborative effort. The process was rather interesting. We met and shared some of our ideas about the philosophies of our associations on education. We discussed issues and concerns, and the brief came out of this. So all of the associations that you see here represented have had input and are very much in favour of the report.

To some people it may be surprising that those of us with children of such differing exceptionalities can come together and agree on a great many issues, but in actual fact it really should not be because we are all here and all concerned about children. It would be untrue, though, to say that there are no differences because, certainly, there are some differences in the areas of concern which we have. I will address them briefly and you may have questions to ask later of the various members who are here.

As a group, we believe that placing children in a self-contained class or a segregated setting

because of a label is inappropriate. But it is just as inappropriate and narrow a view to suggest that all children can be in a regular classroom and have their educational needs met in that setting. There are some parents and associations that believe that integration in a regular class is the best place for their child, and we have to listen to them and support them in that.

However, for other parents, particularly those children whose educational needs are more invisible—the gifted and the learning disabled—it is important that they be in congregated classes in order that their educational needs are met as well. As associations, we all agree that there must be a variety of placement options available for these children from full-time, congregated settings through part-time withdrawal opportunities—sometimes for remediation and sometimes for enrichment—right through to integration in the regular class setting. The placement depends on the child, and it is really important that we consider that, that is the child's needs. Children's needs vary from time to time and so the placement may be different at different times.

Traditionally, we have seen labels used. Sometimes they are medical terminology, such as Down syndrome. We have used the terminology "trainable retarded" and "socially maladjusted." To use those terms is not appropriate in determining a placement—just to use the terminology and the label. We do have to take a look at the child. I would like to go briefly through the brief. I will just highlight a few sections and you can maybe go along. You have copies in front of you. We chose to divide our brief into three areas: first, focusing on the child; second, the parents and the guardians; and, third, on the system of education that we have out there.

Education is about children. We believe that children must be central in any of the decisions that are made regarding education, and their particular education. An important thing to remember is that our children are children first and then they are exceptional. They are children and then they are learning disabled, or they are children and then they are physically handicapped. We must remember this. It is very important. Each child is unique and his or her unique strengths and weaknesses have to be considered in any educational program and educational placement in order to provide the best setting for that child.

Therefore, our first recommendation is the one that you see there, which is that the primary goal of education must be to empower each child to become a functioning, contributing adult mem-

ber of the community within the community and not parallel to it. We feel very strongly about that; it is important that children become part of the community.

There are several recent reports, including the Fullan and Connelly report on teacher education and the recent Radwanski report on dropouts in schools. These suggest that there are some children who are unteachable. We disagree. Each child learns, grows, develops and can be educated. They may grow, learn and develop at different rates, but they all benefit and can benefit from education.

Over and over again, Ministry of Education documents state that the needs of individual children should be accommodated by tailoring instruction to meet individual needs. That is really important. The Ontario government uses the terminology "most enabling environment" to talk about the placement for children. This most enabling environment must be determined for each child, and it needs to be done in consultation and co-operation between parents and educators.

That brings us to the parents, and that is why we are here. When we were discussing parents and parenting at one of our meetings, one of the members of the committee used track and field as a comparison to parents and professionals in dealing with children. She said: "As parents, we are in for the marathon. Professionals are often in for the sprints." That is really very true. As parents, we have a lifelong commitment to our children and we know our children in all of the various settings that they are involved in. So it is very important for us to have the opportunity to talk to teachers and other educators and let them know what is happening in other settings as well as in the school setting, because sometimes our children are learning differently at home than they appear to be learning in a school setting.

We believe parents must be recognized as equal partners in the education of their children. They are the case managers for their children. They know their children. The identification and placement review committee, or the IPRC process, is a vital component in this partnership. There are several recommendations within the report dealing with IPRCs. We can deal with them later, if you like. The ministry really needs to enforce the value and importance of the IPRC process.

Within the system, when we talk about the system, the teacher is the key. There are many components to education, but it is the interaction between the pupil and the teacher which determines a successful and effective program for any

child. Teachers need appropriate training and appropriate support. This is a joint responsibility of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities. There is a need for both teachers and pupils to have the support of specialized professionals. Support personnel and all that encompasses are the responsibility of boards, and the ministry certainly has some responsibility in that area as well.

I mentioned the IPRC process earlier. The IPRC and the special education advisory committee, or SEAC, which were instituted and created at the time of Bill 82 in 1980, are probably two of the most important vehicles around and available for us as parents for communication with the schools. The IPRCs deal with children, and so as parents and educators we meet and determine the placement of and review the program for these children. But SEAC, the special education advisory committee, is communication among trustees, the administrators and parent associations. In the SEACs, we are not there as parents representing our own children or even just the children whose exceptionality we represent and are concerned about, but all exceptional children and how they are viewed within the school system and the importance of the programming that can be done in the boards.

We find that around the province IPRCs and SEACs are not equally viewed as appropriate and good, but we see it as very important that the Ministry of Education reinforce both of these, because where SEACs are working appropriately very good things are happening for kids, and certainly where IPRCs are working for individual children this is extremely helpful.

The Ministry of Education also has an advisory council on special education. The parent representatives on that advisory council are nominated by the Alliance for Children. Several of us who have been on the advisory council in the past are here; so if you have any questions about the advisory council, we could comment on that. It really is an important vehicle for direct input to the ministry and the minister about things that are happening and the concerns we have.

As you are all aware, of course, in the past several years there has been greater and greater communication and collaboration among the ministries. Certainly Memo 81, which came out several years ago with the work that went on among the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Community and Social Services was an important step forward.

We see the continuing collaboration and communication among all those ministries as extremely vital and valuable.

One of the suggestions we have, and which kicks around very often when we are talking together, is that maybe it is time for a ministry of the child. We did not put that as one of our recommendations in our report, but maybe it is something you would like to think about. Do not ask how it would work.

Mr. Keyes: We used to talk about that in the days of Syl Apps. There used to be one, it was called the Ministry of Youth, I believe.

Mrs. Walker: Yes. It is time again.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It did not have education responsibility, though. You are talking about education.

Mrs. Walker: Yes, a ministry for all children.

Recently, we have been hearing a lot about accountability of children; what they should be responsible for and know when they come out of our school systems. That is important, but I think we also must be very sure to take a look and be concerned about the accountability of the school system at all levels.

That brings me to our last recommendation, which is that the Ministry of Education should ensure accountability at all levels—in the classroom, in the schools, at the board level and at the Ministry of Education. Once again, that accountability always has to have the child as the focus. I guess that is really what we want to state, that we are here for children, knowing that the unique needs of each child can be met within our school systems. We are here to support and to work towards that.

1020

That is a very brief overview of what is in the brief. There may be some very specific questions that you have for members of our committee. We certainly have some additional time. Madam Chairman, would the questions come through you to me and then I can pass them on, or do people just ask them directly?

Madam Chairman: We do have a full hour allotted to your group, and I am glad that you have left a large amount of time for questions. We are being televised today, and I wonder if it might be appropriate, so that the viewers will understand where you are coming from, just to briefly go through each of your recommendations. I do not know whether the members might feel this is helpful.

Mrs. Walker: OK.

Madam Chairman: We did not have advanced copies of your brief, so I think members are frantically trying to go through right now and read between the lines.

Mrs. Walker: Yes. I have just been reminded that I forgot to introduce Jane McLean, who is here from the Ontario Society of Autistic Citizens. You will notice that on your list it was Elaine Williams. Jane was in a recent car accident and we are very pleased that she could be here today with us. I apologize to you. If you have questions of any of the associations, their addresses and phone numbers are listed at the end of the report so that anybody can get in contact with them.

Recommendation 1 on page 16 is the one I talked about, the need to empower each child to become a functioning, contributing adult member of the community. Would you like to ask questions of each one as we go through?

Madam Chairman: I think it would probably be appropriate if you went through the entire list and made any comments as you go that are appropriate, and then I took questions from the members. Perhaps the best thing is for the member to address you, and you can siphon the question off to the most appropriate person.

Mrs. Walker: I talked about recommendation 2, although I did not refer to it as a recommendation, that is the full recognition of parents as equal partners in education. For all of us as parents, that is extremely important. Certainly, those of us who have exceptional children have had some excellent opportunities to be involved.

Recommendation 3 talks about when school systems find a concern about a child's learning needs. We feel that at that time the parents must be informed of any concerns. Also, they should be given a copy of the parents' guide to special education. It is available and every board has it. We find from parents that this is not always distributed to them. They should also be informed of appropriate parent associations in the community.

We are there for two reasons. One is to support the parents. Some of our associations support the children as well, but we also are the advocates for those children through the advisory committees of each board. The parents' guide should be available in all schools. We find that very often it is not available in the schools. It is down at board offices, and parents do not always want to go to the board offices. It is a little intimidating at times. We also feel they should be written in clear, concise language, because it is really

important that not too much jargon is set out. Otherwise, it can be terribly confusing for parents.

Another area of concern is language. If it is not in all of the languages that are available in the community, hopefully there are some interpreters and some people available through the boards who can help parents whose first language is not necessarily English or French. That, we feel, is extremely important. We think the parents' guide should include a listing of provincial parent associations, any of the local contacts that are available and also the members of the special education advisory committee who are representatives of parent associations.

With regard to the identification and placement review committee, one of the concerns we all have is that it stands for identification and placement, and we all know that program is an important part of that. We would like to see "program" put into it, the "identification, placement and program review," because at the present time we are not able to appeal or discuss program in any way where we have an opportunity for input and discussion.

We feel there has to be a full range of placement options available to meet the needs of the children, and this should happen throughout the province. It is going to vary, obviously, from board to board because of the sizes of the boards and the geographical areas, etc., but it is important that those options be available.

Going to recommendation 8, very often we find, as parents, that there is good communication at the elementary level, but when our children attend or are going into secondary school, that communication sometimes breaks down. We feel there must be some mechanism put together to ensure that there is communication between the elementary and secondary teachers. In addition to that, there should be more communication with the parents, and often with the students. Certainly by the time they are in secondary level, and often in elementary level, the students should be involved in this discussion as well.

There have to be resources available throughout the province. One of the big areas of concern is the lack of speech pathologists in the province. There are only 40 places available each year to train speech pathologists, and I think more and more we are hearing from boards all over the province, but particularly in the north, that there is a real concern that there are not enough speech pathologists, and some of the other support

personnel as well, available to deal with our children.

Another area I think we all agree on, and it is touched on briefly in the report, is the area of guidance, because guidance, for all children but particularly for some of our exceptional children, is extremely important. We need people who are well versed and knowledgeable in this area.

In recommendation 10, we think there must be co-operation between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities to ensure teachers are appropriately trained and able to cope with the diverse needs of exceptional pupils who may be placed in their classes. This goes from their very beginning preservice, while they are still in education themselves, through in-service during the additional qualification courses that they may take and through professional development within their boards.

There is a lot of information out there. New advances in the areas of psychology, sociology and biochemical research which take a look at human behaviour are always available. We do not believe we can expect every teacher to be up on all that information, but certainly there should be some resource personnel available, so that having that background knowledge, information is there for them so that they can adapt and differentiate their programs for the children.

Several of the associations serve small-population groups of children. In a remote area there may not be very many children and one teacher may be responsible for a child she is differentiating programming for. The supervisory officer in his or her board may not have all the information. We believe that in these isolated cases the Ministry of Education, and particularly the special education and provincial schools branch, should have some responsibility to support and help those teachers who are in isolated areas in dealing with small-population exceptional children.

We believe that the identification and placement review committees should be maintained in order to ensure that the child's program meets his or her needs. In this area, with the review process, very often parents are not cordially invited to attend the review process and we all believe that it is very important the parents are there. Children's needs change. I myself have received a note saying, "We are going to have this meeting, but it's OK; you don't need to come." In actual fact, some parents get that in terms of the initial identification meeting. It is really important that our role not be negated.

We need to strengthen the interaction and work that is done between parents and educators. We also believe that programs should be appealable. At the present time, in terms of the appeal and the tribunal process, only the identification of the placement is appealable. We think program should also be appealable.

We think the special education advisory committee and the role of SEAC should be strengthened, clarified in some areas and supported in other areas, so that it can go forward and be the kind of communication body it was meant to be. I think there has to be respect on both sides of the table that it is an advisory board; it is not a committee that makes the policy, but it is an advisory board. We find that many trustees and boards of education are asking for particular support and help from the SEAC, and that is really very gratifying to us because they are recognizing our contributions.

We also believe that the Ministry of Education's Advisory Council on Special Education should be maintained.

Of course, recommendation 18 is the one to ensure accountability at all levels of the system, and as I said before ensuring that the needs of the child and the children who we have in this province are looked after.

1030

Mrs. O'Neill: I am very happy you have come to us and I am very happy you have come as a group. I had the great privilege of serving on SEAC as a trustee for three years and I learned a lot. The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario, the Ontario Association for Bright Children, the Ontario Association for Community Living and the Ontario Society of Autistic Citizens dragged me around a lot, brought me to many educational sites, and sites beyond. Those four groups seemed to be the ones that needed my presence the most.

I really feel it has broadened my horizons a lot. I feel it has made me much more aware of that which is around me and of the people who are around me. I commend you for your efforts.

There are a couple of your recommendations I would like to ask you a little bit more about. They are recommendations 12 and 17. I thought somehow the Ministry of Education was handling recommendation 12, maybe not in the most ideal way. Particularly in the north, I thought the regional offices took a much stronger role in going out to deliver those kinds of services of co-ordination and supervision. I presume that is where you were talking about isolation and lower incidence. You, however, somehow are giving

us the message that is not as, should I say as complete as possible. Would you like to say a little bit about that? Are there certain parts of the province or are there certain exceptionalities that you somehow feel need more support?

Mrs. Walker: I would like to ask Eva Nichols to respond to that.

Mrs. Nichols: It is not that learning disabilities are a low-incidence exceptionality, but this concern was brought to us in particular through VIEWS for the Visually Impaired, which is a low-incidence exceptionality, but with very specific, special needs. The concern it expressed related not only to the north, but also to some of the rural areas. One county that was mentioned by name, for example—I am sure it does not matter if I mention it—was Essex county, where the only service delivery for low-vision or visually impaired children is by referring them to one of the provincial schools.

The other concern it raised was that the involvement of the regional officers of the Ministry of Education is when invited by the supervisory officer of a particular board. They had the impression there are situations where the supervisory officer, even though he or she is not particularly knowledgeable about the exceptionality and the kind of service delivery that is needed, feels reluctant to go to the regional office and say, "Help, I do not know how to do this."

The concern was that if there were some kind of service delivery mandated through the Ministry of Education's special education and provincial schools branch, so that they had a team travelling around, something like the assessment team that is involved in the north, that would be really helpful. Although it was not unique to the visually impaired, that was the area where it was of particularly grave concern.

Mrs. O'Neill: The second item is the Ministry of Education Advisory Council on Special Education. You seem to have had happy experiences with that body. Are there any things you would like to tell us about that, why it should be maintained, and if there are improvements what they should be in regard to that group?

Mrs. Walker: As one of the members, in the past several years it has been a good experience because the advisory council is not made up just of parents' associations. There are four representatives of parents' associations there. We have representatives from supervisory officers, anglophone and francophone, from psychology and various areas, so that we can discuss. There have been things in the past few years, such as the Connelly-Fullan report and talking about drop-

outs and how they pertain to our children, that we have found very valuable in dealing with all these.

Mrs. Cowie and Mrs. Nichols were also on the committee. Margaret Pollard was one of the members as well. Perhaps one of those might wish to comment.

Mrs. Cowie: I think it has been an excellent opportunity to bring forward concerns. I represent physically disabled children, and certainly it is a forum for bringing forward the concerns of a small population. There are 7,500 physically disabled children in the province. In the total enrolment that is a very small population, but they have a variety of needs, some very complex and some minor. The council gives us an opportunity to bring these concerns forward to the ministry.

Mrs. Nichols: On the other hand, for a larger population, because there are approximately 45,000 children who have been identified as having a specific learning disability, it gave us, as an association, an opportunity to put forward some very specific ideas we have about the educational system. Because the council has worked basically on a consensus basis—we never voted—we did not feel it necessary that we should have a minority report presented to the minister. It has been very helpful.

In terms of where things perhaps need to change, one of the concerns we all have collectively is that in this calendar year the council has not yet been reappointed. We understand that it is with the minister's office and that there have been some practical reasons why it has not happened. It is a concern to us, for example, that you, the select committee on education looking at the philosophy of education, have not had the opportunity of having a joint presentation from the advisory council.

Second, I think a concern that probably would be common to all of us who were on the council last year is that we submitted, I believe, 47 recommendations to the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward) regarding quite a large variety of issues, ranging from some of the things we have touched on here to teacher education and health services, really a wide-ranging list of recommendations.

Frankly, we have not heard at all, individually or collectively, as to what is happening. For an advisory group, it would be very helpful to know the process that is happening. We recognize that not all 47 of our recommendations would be acted upon now, if ever, but it would be very helpful if we knew what was happening in terms

of looking at those. Then, hopefully when the council reconvenes in the fall, which I understand from the minister's office will happen, we will have some kind of response on which of those issues we should pursue further and which of them are things we can now say that the minister's office is looking at and are in the hopper of the educational system and that we no longer need to concern ourselves with.

I think that has been a concern to all of us, but on balance I think that for our associations, individually and collectively, it has been a very good experience. Certainly, the same kind of feeling has come from the teachers' associations, directors of education and so on, that they find it a very good forum in which you can really discuss issues with no holds barred and really say it as you see it, without feeling any concern that things will be taken the wrong way, and I think coming up with some very good ideas.

For example, one of the items we dealt with recently was special education services for children in French immersion. When we first came together and this was brought to us through the special education branch, I think our opinions were really diverse, yet after a couple of meetings we were able to come up with a policy recommendation to the ministry that all the groups could support. I think that is pretty exceptional.

Mrs. O'Neill: I thank you for that and I will certainly try to find out where the 47 recommendations are. I will also say that having rethought the word "dragged," I do not want to say "parents dragged me", they invited me graciously. At times I might have been unwilling, but in the end it was an invitation I loved.

Madam Chairman: The minister is going to be appearing before our committee tomorrow afternoon. Perhaps at that stage we could inquire as to the status of the advisory council's recommendations.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Even better than that, why do we not advise the minister today that we would like that information for tomorrow? Why do we not also make sure that we schedule that kind of presentation this fall?

1040

Madam Chairman: Bill Lipischak from the ministry is here right now. Perhaps he would take note of that request from the committee, so the minister will have that advice before he comes tomorrow.

Interruption.

Madam Chairman: I do not know if that was a commentary on the request.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I do not think that was Bill.

Madam Chairman: Mrs. O'Neill, I believe you have completed.

Mrs. O'Neill: Yes, thank you.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I also am very pleased with your presentation. Clearly, a number of the issues you are raising are issues that need to be brought to this committee. You are saying things I have been frustrated by over the years around identification and placement review committees and the appeal process. Having taken the first appeal under the new system and found out we could not talk about program at all, you are in a ludicrous position when you try to argue against a school board that somehow the assessment or the placement is inappropriate because the program is inappropriate. You cannot argue about the program to make your point, and it is really an impossible situation. That point was made by the integration action group as well, but I am glad you reinforced it today.

There are a couple of things I want to focus on, if I can. Why do I not start with the most difficult first? I want to make sure we have some time to deal with this.

An issue we have not really talked about at all in the committee as yet is presumptions in theories of child development. We have really not touched that. We have talked about the child-centred focus and all that kind of thing, but we have really not talked about the pedagogical foundations for how we teach kids. Are we in fact using appropriate systems? Do they fit modern psychological theories about the development of children?

You people, of course, represent as broad a range of kids who do not fit the norm, if you can put it that way, as you can imagine; and your organizations in various ways have come up with a whole variety of approaches to dealing with the development of children in a specific group, whether it is autism or hearing impairment or whatever.

I am wondering if you have any thoughts you can share with us of any consensus that has come up in your group around presumptions about how we educate kids and what works or what does not work in terms of those underlying principles of child development.

Mrs. Walker: Is there anybody in particular who wants to respond? Mrs. Nichols will, always; you know that.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Eva does not duck anything.

Mrs. Walker: No. I will want to give other people a chance here, too.

Mrs. Nichols: When the group got together, in fact we did not talk about child psychology particularly, but I think if you did a survey of the groups, we would probably all talk about the fact that we all believe the work of people like Piaget and so on in terms of sequential development through concrete to abstract, that kind of thing.

I think what is more important about that is we all believe that in fact all children do learn and develop, and whether they reach the stage of moving from the concrete to the abstract at age 3 or at age 13 is not the issue. The fact is that they all do learn and our comments about children not being unteachable of course reflect that particular point.

Another area where we certainly did have very close uniformity, and in a way it comes back to the issue of how the whole thing of definitions, categories, etc. is handled, is that when people do not use terms, then they talk about learning needs, and that sounds very good. "Let's just identify a child's learning needs." The issue, though, is that if you are looking only at the things a child cannot do at a predetermined rate or in a predetermined way, in a way you are not really looking at how that child can learn.

What we are all agreed upon is that whatever assessment identification goes on for all children, not just exceptional children, we should start out by focusing on the child's strength, and in all areas, not just academic but social, physical and emotional as well. Then we should go on from that, having identified that the child is good at all of these things, and say, "All right, if these are the pre-agreed standards"—we accept there are pre-agreed standards—"these are the areas where perhaps the child's progress is not as we would expect." Then we could use those areas of strength we have identified to find out how we can have the child develop his own individual coping skills to circumvent, overcome or, in some other way, cope with the learning need.

I think we have all found, as parent associations, that our teachers, however willing, have not been trained to start out from the area of strength and progress and go from that to the need. They are taught much more readily how to identify the need.

I have a daughter who is at Queen's University training to be a teacher, and she and I have had this conversation many times. You have to start with the strength, then you move to the need and

then the secondary component is the coping skill the child can develop and what accommodation in society is required to make that coping skill effective. It is a sort of double-lock-and-key mechanism, if you like.

I think the whole issue of remediation in the school system very often remains teacher-centred. The teacher is responsible for the remediation and the child is really not enabled and encouraged to assume some of the responsibility for his own learning. Obviously that does not come naturally—they have to be helped—but there comes a point when the teacher's role really is to assist the child to assume the responsibility for developing coping skills and also to work out, if there are some unusual and really severe special needs, what kind of accommodation will enable those coping skills to be successful.

I think all the groups would certainly agree on that kind of a philosophy. Certainly our comments about the need for looking at strength are very important ones that we all agreed upon.

Mrs. Walker: If I could just add to that, I think that is our concern about the parents, because the parents in the home situation very often do see strengths and things that are happening at home that may not be recognized within the school setting because they are looking for the deficits rather than the strengths. This is why we believe it is so very important that we work together as equal partners for the children.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That does lead me into my second question, but I am wondering if maybe tomorrow the steering committee can discuss this whole notion of whether or not we need some research compilation on these notions of development, because we have not really talked about those. They are obviously linked to the underlying philosophy. Any members who have some ideas could maybe talk to their members on the steering committee, and then we can maybe make some decisions tomorrow morning on it. Would that be all right?

Madam Chairman: Yes. We have a steering committee meeting tomorrow morning at 10, so if any members of the various caucuses wish to tell their representatives they would like this type of research, and/or if they have any comments about the way in which we are going, then please do that before 10 o'clock tomorrow.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: If I could just move to the role of the parent, I am continually struck by our list of goals for the education system as being so individualistically oriented and seeming, to me, to presume an equality of basic start for all

kids. I have been coming at it less from the disadvantage that a child with a learning disability or a particular physical handicap may have and looking more in terms of the poverty disadvantage, but I think the same principle applies.

One of the things I like about discussing the role of parents in this is that in fact it broadens our notion of what education is about. It strikes me that maybe we should be looking in the definition of goals at some community goals that we want to establish as well, one of them being this notion of parental involvement and that being the ultimate accountability in the system.

The trouble with it when you go past the notion of that being an important goal—which I think most members would agree, because we want more parental involvement and we can see it dissipating through the system as it goes up into the secondary level especially—is that, depending on your economic status and other factors, you may not feel that you have the power to be able to participate. It sure was the case for parents of kids with disabilities in the past. Until the organizations really started to come together, those people felt isolated and unable to be the advocates they have become since.

After you accept the principle, the difficulty I have is, where do you go with that? What are the structures that will ultimately guarantee that parental involvement and will push them into the professional hierarchy that is there which now controls our school system in such a hierarchical fashion? I wonder if you have any thoughts about that, about how we make sure that the parents have that role and there is that expectation on parents for responsibility within the education system as well.

1050

Mrs. Walker: If I can begin to answer Mr. Johnston's questions, and there may be others who wish to respond as well, I think there are several issues as well in terms of the poverty, and that is not one we have talked about particularly in our committee; nor have we really dealt with children who are in care or children who do not have parents. That is certainly an issue that needs to be addressed, but it was not something that we dealt with in this.

Other issues, of course, are that very often both parents are working and that there are a large number of single-parent families out there. I think there really are some things that the school systems and the schools themselves must be willing to do. In terms of identification and placement review committees, one of the concerns we have is that they are often during the

school day and during the time that people are working. Very often, certainly, it is very difficult for parents to get off work. Some boards do address that issue and allow some flexibility so that parents do not have to take off time from work to come, but it does happen.

In the early primary education project report—I do not know whether you know that one; it is the yellow one with the tumbling kids on the front. I just love it—there certainly are some good recommendations there. They talk about early childhood and early participation of parents, and I think that is where we have to start. If there are some areas where we can start getting the parents involved at that time, then it continues. I agree with you about the concern that this participation does not continue. As a parent of children at the secondary level, you take a look around at parents' night, interview night, and there certainly are not as many parents as were there when your children were in elementary school. Very often it is a concern.

There may be some ways that teachers can address this. Maybe, again, we should be taking a look at the strengths of the children. If, as a parent, you are always going to the school and hearing all sorts of negative things about your child, it is very difficult to continue to go back. Maybe if there was more emphasis on the teachers taking a look at strengths, then this would be appropriate.

If I can just relate one of my own personal stories: When my daughter was in kindergarten, her teacher was excellent, because she actually spent at least 10 minutes—and it sounds like a very small period of time during the week—very specifically focusing on each child. She said, "I am doing that because usually you know this kid and that kid, and for the rest in between you just say to the parents, 'Well, they are really doing fine.'" She very specifically worked with these children so that she knew each child. When the parents came for interview time, she knew their child and was taking a look at him. That makes us, as parents, much more responsive and willing to be involved.

I do not know whether there are any other members of the group who would like to respond. Mrs. Nichols.

Mrs. Nichols: We feel that our recommendation requesting that when a concern is first identified and it is small, the parent be notified, and notified of the existence of some parent support groups in the community, is a really key aspect of this.

So often what happens is that the child's need—not progressing as well, becoming a bit of a behaviour problem—initially is not raised with the parent in the mistaken notion that perhaps it will go away and perhaps the parent would just as soon not know. Quite often parents go to the school for the first time to find out that their child is failing or that their child needs to be sent for an IPRC because his behaviour has become unmanageable. It is a very scary experience, even for parents who had good educational experiences themselves. If the parents did not, it really is particularly bad.

Second, inevitably the system, whether it is the early school leaving committee or any other meeting the parent goes to, where you have 27 professionals sitting on one side of the table and the parent—I am exaggerating somewhat; it could be 26—is on his or her own—or even if there are two of them, even if both are able to be there, it is still a very unbalanced situation.

All of our associations, in fact, do provide advocates to go along with the parents, but very often parents do not know that. We sometimes joke around in our association, and I am sure it is the same for everybody else, that parents phone up and say, "Where were you when I needed you five years ago?" And you think to yourself, "Where were we? Well, we were there in that community but they did not know about us and we did not know about them."

We feel it is a role that we cannot assume completely but that we can certainly assist with, if in fact the educational system does its part by telling parents: "Look, your child is having some problems. Why don't you call Mrs. Walker? She is a parent who has had some experience in this field and she will talk with you." There is a really good support system that we can offer, if we are allowed to do so.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I realize we are running short of time. One of the things that maybe we can ask the group to send us information on, rather than trying to deal with it today, unless another member wishes to take that line of questioning, is the role of the institutional provincial schools, in some cases that applies to kids. Other kids are going into hospital off and on because of other problems they have.

I think it is very important for this committee to get some idea of what your groups think of the quality of education within those institutions. Any of the principles you are talking about would mostly apply to the public system here, how those accountability systems, parent involvement and all that kind of thing should take place

within institutional structures, whether it is temporary help within a hospital or long-term help within institutions for the blind or the deaf in the province, etc.

I wonder, if nobody else wishes to follow that line, perhaps you could send us something on that, particularly because it does obviously fit your expertise.

Madam Chairman: We would be very appreciative if you could send us that material. We do not want to put you to any extraordinary amount of work, but if you could send us just your own compilation of some of your thoughts on it, that would be very helpful.

Mrs. Walker: Yes, we will.

Mr. Villeneuve: Ladies, thank you very much for being the advocates of a vast majority of exceptional children and students in Ontario, those who indeed most need to be represented.

The Down Syndrome Association of Metropolitan Toronto was here earlier this week and spoke very forcefully about integration. I guess that is part of the problem, and that follows up a bit on Mr. Johnston's questions. I know, as you have just mentioned, it can sometimes be a bit intimidating. Is there enough flexibility, either at the board level or at the ministry level, for them to accept some of the things that you see as obvious? Are they receptive to your suggestions and recommendations, or is there some degree of lipservice?

Mrs. Walker: There certainly is. In terms of programs and things that are available, we very often see things written on paper which are not in actual fact what we see happening with our children.

Flexibility is one of the things we have addressed, to a small extent, in the report. We believe it is important that the boards are flexible. They are not all flexible because they have a philosophy and they have determined that is how they will look at exceptional children and how they will work with them.

We feel some of that flexibility can be supported and dealt with by looking at and by utilizing appropriately the special education advisory committee, but then it has to filter all the way down through the system. Flexibility is a real problem.

Mr. Villeneuve: Further to that, we find that in many instances they have classes in place and, rather than adjust those they say: "Those are there, and that is where this exceptional child is going to go," because it happens to be there. It might not quite fit the puzzle, but that is what is

there. Maybe we should be looking at the entire philosophy of some of that flexibility.

Also, I gather that different boards have very large discrepancies in the numbers of exceptional pupils and students that they have. I think we have to come to some more uniform way of assessing what is an exceptional student. I think we go from some boards with as low as 3 per cent to some boards with in the 20 per cent of exceptional students. Would you comment on that, please?

Mrs. Walker: I see two aspects in that. First of all, just in terms of what is happening—that these classes are there and we have them in place and this is what we are going to say—I have a difficulty with boards like that.

Peter Wiseman, who was the former director of special education, provincial schools branch, talked about how we have gone through the years of development and implementation of Bill 82 and programming for exceptional children. We now are in the area of refinement. The area of refinement really means taking a look at and continuing to evolve to ensure that those programs fit and change. I think that is a very important aspect of it.

1100

Mrs. Nichols: You asked about the Ministry of Education. I would like to hand a bouquet with a little bit of a stinger to the Ministry of Education.

The Ministry of Education is very clear cut in its philosophy of service for exceptional students in terms of mandating a continuum of service based on the individual needs of the child. That is really good because it means that the boards are supposed to look at each child's individual needs, discuss them with the parent, and then a child is placed appropriately, one hopes.

The problem is that, coupled with the autonomy of school boards in this province, it means that many school boards take that philosophy, which has certainly been articulated, legislated, regulated, and everything else you want to think of, and interpret it in the way they think suits their community best. The Ministry of Education certainly tells them when the way they are doing it is inappropriate, but in fact we do not seem to have very many carrots and certainly no sticks in making it stick.

You said 3 per cent to 11 per cent, but in fact PAAC, that long-named association, did a survey. We found, collectively, that the range is much more like 0.02 per cent to about 12 per cent, and the extremes worry us. We see the letters that go from the Ministry of Education to

boards identifying where they in fact do not measure up to what the legislation and the accompanying regulations say, but we see a lot less of how anybody goes in there and says: "Thou shalt measure up or else." There does not appear to be any "or else," and that really is a concern.

We actually did talk, as a group, about whether we should make some suggestions about what the "or else" should be. We decided that really was not part of our mandate. That has to go back to you, the select committee, the ministry, and so on. I think part of the dilemma is that there is a great deal of autonomy. As a former school trustee, I used to support that. As a representative of a parent association, I can see a lot of problems with it.

Mr. Villeneuve: I think we can appreciate where someone with your experience who has worn both hats is coming from. I certainly see it as an important mandate of this committee.

Madam Chairman: Just before we go on to Mr. Mahoney, I want to mention that I am very glad you brought up the Down syndrome association's presentation and its attitude towards integration because I have a very burning question myself on that. I am not supposed to do this, as chair, but I am abusing or using my prerogative as chair to ask a supplementary, with your permission, Mr. Villeneuve.

Mr. Villeneuve: We will allow you to do that.

Madam Chairman: The Down syndrome association felt very strongly about total integration to the extent that it recommended that the words "special education" be taken entirely out of the Education Act. While I certainly sympathize with the need to integrate many of the children to a greater extent, I am not sure that I agree with integration for every child. I think your comments that there are no children who are unteachable are very true, but there are definitely children who are more difficult to teach and require far more resources.

What I am afraid will happen, if you go for total integration of every child, is that this poor classroom teacher who has 30 children will now have not 30 children but maybe 32 children, one of whom may be gifted and one of whom may have Down syndrome, and that teacher would be asked to spread himself even more. I do have concerns about that.

I know in the larger boards such as Toronto, it is a little easier with some of the programs to give choices. For instance, my son was in the part-time gifted for one day a week for several years. Last year, we chose to put him in the

full-time gifted, now that he is in grade 7. We do have some of those choices.

I am sure that some of the smaller boards do not have options like that and I was wondering if you could expand on your earlier comments that you felt it had to be a balance of integration and perhaps in some cases segregation.

Mrs. Cowie: We just wanted to comment that all of us agree that a full continuum of services is required. There will always be a need for some segregated classrooms. There are children whose needs cannot be met in an integrated setting. Children can actually be segregated by being integrated, if you can understand that. By being put in a classroom where their needs are not being met, they are actually left out rather than being integrated, and that is not the goal of parent associations. We want the children included in the community. If their needs are better met in the segregated classroom, then so be it. But as much as possible, we would like to see the children in their regular classroom, in their neighbourhood school, with support for the teacher.

Madam Chairman: It seems to me a very balanced viewpoint to have.

Mrs. Walker: Yes, very definitely. I think within every one of our associations there are people, certainly in the Association for Bright Children there are some who say that all gifted children should be in a segregated or congregated gifted classroom from the time they are six. But that is not true for every child and I think that is what we have to do: take a look at the child, the child's strengths and the child's needs at that particular time, and it may mean a regular class or it may mean a self-contained class. These are the things that have to be determined and that is the value of the identification and placement review committee, because we can determine it through that. Just as you were able to change and choose a different option for your son, I am sure with his consultation, that is appropriate.

Mr. Mahoney: Thank you for coming. You might have gathered by my interjection that I have sat on the other side of the table from those 27 professionals and I can only say of your statement on page 10, about how a parent feels in this relationship—that some parents feel helpless dealing with the IPRC in the review—amen.

In my view, an analogy to the concept of eliminating the word "special" from education is the goal of the Community Living Association to eliminate the word "special" from olympics, the feeling that wheelchair basketball should simply be an olympic event rather than a "special"

olympic event. The whole concept of the members of the association to have participation side by side with able-bodied athletes is one that they have stated as a goal and one that I personally support.

Having said that, there are obviously children who need special attention and have special needs and requirements. I am curious, though, about your recommendation 6, where you talk about adding the word "program" to the IPRC. I would have thought it more appropriate to eliminate the word "placement" and replace it with the word "program."

My experience in this is in having a son identified with a learning disability about five years ago, and in the first two years of that identification going to three separate schools, spending his time at the one school that was totally out of the community, a 30-minute bus ride into another community; in a closet, literally, converted to a classroom because they did not have space; and experiencing the frustration of a parent. I believe a lot of the changes in special education have occurred because of parents, because we are just not going to take it any more.

I really commend you for your work. The placement aspect of it is something my wife and I went through, and fighting and saying, "Why are you taking this very normal, very healthy, very average kid and, because you have identified a learning disability, putting him in a closet in another community?"

When you have those 27 professionals on the other side of the table it is very intimidating. It is very difficult to argue with them. You go through all the guilt feelings, saying "There is nothing wrong with my kid" and all of this stuff; and all of those frustrations, which we overcame. He spent three years of segregation and finally, through insistence, was integrated and goes out of the integrated class for one session a day.

He is now as different as night and day, absolute night and day, in terms of the feelings of self-worth that he has developed in school. He was always very strong out of school and socially and in sports, but in school he is no longer embarrassed, which he was because he was put into this closet, in this special category. So I have concerns about the placement aspect of the identification and placement review committee program and the whole review.

1110

I recognize there are numbers problems. If you have only seven kids in a whole family of schools that are identified with a learning disability or

whatever the particular problem happens to be, it is difficult to have a special class in every school for each child. More important, it is difficult to have a teacher qualified and specialized to deal with each individual child in each school. I understand those numbers problems.

But I wonder why you are not maybe a little stronger in suggesting in identification situations like that that the parent have more say about the placement; that the placement, where it can be worked out, be integrated and the child go out perhaps for half an hour or an hour per day for any special assistance or tutoring that might need to occur. Maybe I could just get your comments on that.

One other thing you might comment on—it is a thought I have just had—is what you think about doing those interviews in the parents' home instead of in the school.

Mrs. Walker: In terms of placement, placement can be a regular class and I think it is important that sometimes we do talk about placement as being a regular class. I think that is really important. Some of the others may have some comments to make on it, but I think placement will guarantee the comments that we made about the need for options, and I think that is very important. I do not think we have any real problem with the terminology of placement. Certainly, we want programming.

Mrs. Nichols: In some instances, the word "placement" can be a little bit of a protection for a parent, and for the child of course, because in fact what can happen is, supposing you have a child who has really severe learning disabilities and does in fact require a fair amount of time in a self-contained classroom to get him or her into a situation so that they can go back into the regular class and it is decided that starting September 1988 that is at the Duke of York public school, etc. Then come the following March there are changes in the community and the placement can be changed by suddenly saying that whole class is being relocated to another school, another community, that kind of thing. So we felt that retaining placement but adding program, in a sense, provided that kind of protection.

In fact, as Marg says, it does then address the full range of possibilities, because there are some children who do require some fairly serious intervention, such as one of the provincial schools for a period of time, and retaining that placement guarantees that there is some discussion about where that program is actually delivered.

Mrs. Welsh: I like your idea about having the meetings in the home. I think that is a super idea. It would give the parents a chance to say, if they did not like what was happening, "Get up and leave the room."

Mr. Mahoney: That is right. "Put that coffee down."

Mrs. Welsh: That is right. "Get out of here."

Mr. Mahoney: I would just add that I think this sort of issue is a microcosm, in a way, of the entire problem, in my opinion, of parental involvement in education. Frankly, I think parents are intimidated by the education system. I will not get into the Radwanski report but the decision of sitting down with a 12- or 13-year-old child in grade 8 and saying, "Now, what do you want to do the rest of your life?" and "How do we sort out all of these programs? What actually is basic and general, and whatever happened to the open concept?" It is a very confusing issue, and with both parents working the old days of mom having more time and taking more interest are simply not available to most people as an option.

I commend you for what you are doing and support many of your ideas and your concepts.

Madam Chairman: We are running slightly over time, so Mr. Keyes, if you could make your final question on the brief side.

Mr. Keyes: Very brief. I congratulate the alliance as well, because here you have 13 organizations that are able to make a presentation and we would probably never get the time to hear from the whole 13 independently and yet you have been able to show that you each have the same general view of the special needs of the child. The sophistication with which the system has progressed is best exemplified by the fact that we used to talk about the world of one in seven, and considered that one child out of every seven was handicapped, and now in your brief we are at the point of one in six, which really simply shows the sophistication we have had in measuring and determining children's special needs.

I did want to talk on Richard Johnston's accountability but I am going to leave that for my other question.

As I looked at your presentation, too, here we are faced with trying to look at the philosophy of education and perhaps you will not be back before us and that is why we have all-encompassing briefs. I tried to sort your recommendations out as to which were philosophical in nature and which were operational. I think I have done that in my own mind. You may not agree with them, but I would ask you people to go back

and look at them. Some of them are very distinctly philosophical, which is what we are attempting to deal with in these two weeks, and some are very distinctly operational, so I tried to kind of cut those out for now but will look at them very seriously in our September meetings.

As we look at this—and I wonder if you would agree or not and comment on it—the one that I think is perhaps the greatest area of need for change might very well be in the teacher training aspect of it. I doubt whether your daughter, Mrs. Nichols, when she comes out of there, will be quite fitted out to do all the roles that each of your associations wants if she finds three of those children in a classroom, despite her time at the most wonderful university in the province, Queen's University—

Mrs. Nichols: I thought you might say that.

Mr. Keyes: —in the faculty of ed; nevertheless, the scope of time just is not adequate in teacher training to provide and fully equip those people. Would that be an area that we really need to focus on philosophically, the training of teachers so that they are better equipped?

You put it in as one of your recommendations, number 10, in fact, but I am trying to spearhead what I consider may be the priority. If we looked at it in that terminology, what would you consider as the priority in this whole issue of the philosophy of education and the changes? You may not even want to answer.

Mrs. Walker: Oh yes, we do. I think teacher education is an extremely important area and many of us as parents have an opportunity both to go in to teachers who are in their preservice and in-service training and talk to them about what it is to have exceptional children. But I think teacher training is such an incredibly important area. Mrs. Nichols would like to make a comment as well, which has some reference to it.

Mrs. Nichols: I would just refer you, if you get an opportunity, to look at the recommendations that the provincial advisory council on special education made to the minister in terms of teacher education, because I think some of our comments there were quite valid in terms of the importance and the approach.

Just in terms of what you are saying about Queen's, I would like to comment that in fact the kind of teacher education that Queen's offers through its concurrent program—which means that students over a four-year period take courses in education and they can take foundation courses in things like autism and learning disabilities and the physically handicapped before they ever go and take their Bachelor of

Education degree—in my opinion, really does equip them better; perhaps not as adequately as we would like but certainly a lot better.

I know there are all kinds of problems with the autonomy of universities in having a government group say, "Let's see if, in fact, we can mandate that form of teacher education for every new teacher;" but I think it is something that you may want to look at, as a committee, the difference between the concurrent and the consecutive teacher education model, because it is quite different in terms of what it delivers to the student.

Mr. Keyes: I vote for the concurrent. I have had hundreds of them in my school.

Madam Chairman: You might be interested to know that the Alliance for Children is on the list for September in addition to some of the individual member groups, so we will have another opportunity to dialogue with you. I would like to thank you very much for coming today. I liked a lot of your ideas. I am not sure I am ready for a ministry of the child. Knowing my children, they would be perched out in the minister's anteroom ready to lobby and negotiate on behalf of children for more rights and more autonomy. Personally, I do not think I could take more power for my children. We do thank you very much for your concern for children in this province and thank you for coming.

Our next delegation is the Ontario Catholic Secondary School Principals' Association. If you would like to come forward, good morning and welcome to our committee. Now that you are seated, you can introduce yourselves individually for purposes of electronic Hansard.

1120

ONTARIO CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION

Mr. Rooney: I am Jim Rooney, president of the Ontario Catholic Secondary School Principals' Association. We are delighted this morning to be with you.

On my immediate left is one of our directors, Stan Kutz. On his left is our treasurer, Dan DiRocco. On my right is the chairman of our educational and social issues committee, John Ware.

We thank you for the opportunity to be here this morning. We would like to share with you some highlights of the brief and then be at your disposal for dialogue and discussion.

The Ontario Catholic Secondary School Principals' Association—OCSSPA is our acronym—we want to stress is a voluntary association of

we want to stress is a voluntary association of principals and vice-principals serving in Ontario Catholic secondary schools and our association is pleased to be with you this morning.

Our association was founded in the early 1970s. One of our major objectives then was to encourage the government to extend provincial funding to Catholic secondary schools. It rejoined with others in the Catholic community when this became a reality in 1984.

OCSSPA represents about 335 secondary school administrators serving in 137 secondary schools.

At our most recent annual general meeting, the membership approved a revised constitution which states the objectives of our association as follows:

To provide a continuing forum for Catholic secondary school principals and vice-principals to share mutual concerns and exchange ideas; to improve the quality of instruction and the religious orientation of our schools; to work in collaboration with the bishops of Ontario to fulfil the mandate of the church in education; to provide a sense of unity through a strong collective voice in all matters affecting Catholic secondary schools; to promote the personal, professional and Christian development of administrators of Catholic secondary schools.

Our brief is in three parts. Part A will focus on the teacher; parts B and C will focus on the students we serve.

From our mission statement I would like to quote, "In collaboration with a staff committed to gospel values, we strive by example and interaction to proclaim the Christian message according to the Catholic tradition, embodying Christianity in our lives and being patterns to the younger members of all that is good, true and fully human."

The success of our schools and the achievement of our mission is dependent on several factors. Among these is commitment to a common vision of life, a close partnership that holds between home, school and parish. However, the key has to be the work and dedication of our Catholic teachers.

Teachers will substantially determine whether or not a school realizes its goals and objectives. We then, as teachers in Catholic secondary schools, need to be chosen with great care, for each person is recognized for the gifts he or she brings. Why? It is to serve our youth. Our teachers share a mission in this respect, a mission to be witnesses to Christ in a school setting.

The Catholic teacher realizes that example is always more important than mere exhortation in giving witness to the ideal. Without the role model provided by the teacher, students could come to the conclusion that Christian behaviour is a frustrating and an impossible ideal.

Values are communicated through interpersonal relationships. The teacher's orientation towards religion, belief and Christian values plays an important part in preserving the special Christian atmosphere in the Catholic secondary school.

It is necessary then to give separate school boards the authority to continue the preferential hiring of Catholic teachers for their schools. Therefore, legislation must be changed as follows: to guarantee the exclusive hiring power of separate school boards, and notwithstanding the Ontario Human Rights Code or the Charter of Rights, section 136-1a of the Education Act must be repealed; to encourage the formation of teacher candidates specifically for employment in Catholic schools, our teacher training institutions must offer courses in religion/theology whose content and structure are governed by responsible Catholic bodies; and to recognize a need for the certification of teachers for the proper teaching of religion as an academic subject.

Action in these areas would constitute progressive steps toward the creation of a large, well-qualified pool of Catholic educators imbued with the proper spirit and capable of fulfilling their responsibilities as people called to serve our young people in a special, caring way.

In the second issue we would like to focus on, the key is students; in this instance students who do not go to post-secondary institutions, specifically universities.

From our mission statement, "Respecting the past and welcoming the challenges of the present, we work creatively and courageously to provide an education that prepares students to live in our world as it is, while striving to change it to what it might be."

There is in Ontario a climate of public opinion that expects most secondary students to proceed to university or to the colleges of applied arts and technology, CAATs. In point of fact, a majority of secondary school students will never do so. This is an issue that needs to be addressed in any comprehensive reform of education in our province.

We must, as a matter of public policy, begin to develop in public opinion a new consciousness, a genuine respect for that body of knowledge and

expertise, that way of experiencing and understanding the world that is concrete, practical and communal.

In our schools, we must find ways to develop a new consciousness that will honour the learner of the practical as well as the learner of the abstract; that will judge human achievement not by the prestige of the career one pursues in isolation, but by the constructive and communal use to which one's talents are put. We must find or train teachers who can live and communicate this consciousness authentically.

Every aspect of the curriculum will need to be rethought. It will be as important for a student to be able to analyse the daily newspaper as a Shakespearean sonnet, to be able to discuss the practical issues surrounding free trade as to recite the theories of Adam Smith, and to be able to write a coherent memo as to master the footnoting of a research essay.

We are talking about real knowledge, with its appropriate rigour and discipline, but knowledge that is congruent with the life experience, learning style and future utility of those students who do not go to university or college.

The appropriate organization of our institutions to deliver this knowledge would require much further thought and research than can be provided in this brief. However, some of the preliminary reflections are these:

We need to ensure that we are not just merely talking about increased vocational schools or classes because, as you know, they would be outdated before they could be established. However, we are focusing on these three points:

1. The colleges of applied arts and technology must be brought back to their original vision and purpose.

2. Co-operative education and linkage programs will need to be greatly expanded and articulated. We should probably be looking at an arrangement where a secondary program would lead directly into specific programs in the community colleges.

3. In conjunction with employers and unions, there could be secondary school programs that would be connected to apprenticeships in the major trades and service sectors.

The implementation of the above three suggestions may require significant revisions of the Ontario secondary school diploma requirements.

Our third focus this morning is students at special risk.

From our mission statement, "...to create conditions under which students' faith and their

intellectual and physical development will flower."

1130

Students who are transferred, not promoted, to secondary schools are likely to be affected by sweeping educational change. These students generally enrol in basic level programs at the present time. They are probably transferred for one or more of the following reasons: They may have a low degree of intelligence and will have to cope with this all their lives; they may not have mastered study or learning skills, either because of lack of readiness or lack of encouragement or motivation; they may face personal, family or social problems that make schooling a low priority in their lives.

The successful school system of the future will address the needs of each of these types of students. In this context, we suggest the following areas be given some serious consideration:

1. Attractive, practical programs challenging low-functioning students at their level must reflect realistic, achievable goals.

2. Schools must be seen as preparation for the student's total life, not just for a job. The swing of the pendulum must never lose sight of the fact that the customer in education is the developing person.

3. Board and school initiatives should be encouraged in developing special education credit programs. In addition, a public relations program should be initiated to educate employers in the interpretation of secondary school transcripts.

4. Programs should remain for those students who are capable of learning, but who do so at a rate that holds them significantly behind the majority of their age group.

5. Ties with the business-industrial community, with the colleges of applied arts and technology and with private trade schools willing to meet the needs of students at the basic level should be strengthened. High-risk students especially, should be permitted to specialize in an area of demonstrated ability and interest.

6. Because of the relatively small market, incentive should be given to publishers to develop attractive textbooks to support programs for the low-functioning students.

7. A full range of programs should be offered in all schools.

8. Integration in the secondary school may be accomplished by family-style units where a slow learner can contribute to and profit from the bonding, spirit-raising activities that create a sense of belonging and develop a positive

self-image. In subject classrooms, the students must encounter courses that challenge, but not beyond their ability to succeed.

9. The underachievement of low-functioning students should be analysed and the root causes addressed.

There are some suggestions we have with respect to how those changes may be implemented.

We believe that the rapid expansion of the Catholic secondary schools in Ontario cannot be attributed solely to the government's decision to extend provincial funding to grades 11 and 12. Catholic secondary schools experienced rapid expansion during the late 1960s through the mid-1980s primarily because of the strong wish of parents to provide a Catholic secondary education for their children. Separate school boards were willing supporters by providing grade 9 and 10 programs throughout the province, while teachers and administrators accepted such conditions as large classes and heavy schedules to ensure the viability of their schools.

We, as members of the Ontario Catholic Secondary School Principals' Association, are proud to be partners in the delivery of publicly supported secondary education. We have every confidence that, as the future unfolds, the program offered in our schools will meet the needs of students and parents and contribute to the growth, diversity and prosperity of our province.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Rooney. For questions we have Mr. Reyecraft, Mr. Johnston and Mrs. O'Neill so far.

Mr. Reyecraft: Thank you, Madam Chairman. I wanted to focus on your recommendations about certifying teachers for the teaching of religion as an academic subject. Knowing the nature of your system and keeping in mind that last week we had before us the Ecumenical Study Commission on Public Education, which was advocating a return to the teaching of religion in all of our schools, when you talk about religion as an academic subject, are you referring to a number of different religions or specifically to Roman Catholicism?

Mr. Rooney: We are specifically referring to Roman Catholicism and the need to recognize Catholic theology as an academic subject. Religion, in its general sense, obviously includes, as our curriculum in grade 11 already does, world religions and that university of diversity of religion as a whole. But our identification here of recommendation 2 is

specifically courses in religion and theology for Catholic students.

Mr. Reyecraft: The Ecumenical Study Commission on Public Education and many others in this province maintain that current provisions in grade 11, to which you referred, are inadequate for teaching young people of this province about the many religions practised here. What is the position of your association on those recommendations we have received?

Mr. Rooney: I would like to turn, if I may, to Mr. Ware.

Mr. Ware: I am not sure I am aware of the recommendations from the Ecumenical Study Commission.

Mr. Reyecraft: Basically, that we expand the teaching of religions in the current school system in the province, that it be much broader, that it be offered in more grades, perhaps in every grade, and that it cover the broad range of religions.

Mr. Ware: This would be basically as an aspect of our multicultural society?

Mr. Reyecraft: Perhaps, yes.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That is how some of us would like to look at it.

Mr. Ware: This is similar to the situation where religion is taught across the spectrum in the public schools in Great Britain. People would take specific training for teaching religion as an academic subject. Our request in our brief is that we teach theology and religion throughout our schools in each grade level as academic subjects, so we are looking at the training of our teachers specifically through the programs we offer in our schools, much the same as you would train a teacher for the teaching of history, geography or English. That is our specific recommendation.

With regard to the recommendations of the Ecumenical Study Commission, I would like to read all the recommendations. I am afraid I have not. I would support the aspect of the idea that the world religion course which can currently be offered in grade 11 perhaps should be looked at and expanded as an aspect to explain the cultural backgrounds, the different backgrounds of many people in our communities. How is that for not knowing about the report?

Mr. Reyecraft: Can I perhaps be a little more direct? You believe that students in elementary schools and secondary schools should be taught about other religions?

Mr. Ware: We learn at different stages. I am really not sure at what stage you would introduce other religions to, say, a six-year-old or a

seven-year-old. You are really teaching them a concept of God and an understanding of self and an individual place in society. This is a very large question. I do not really feel particularly comfortable dealing with it at this stage. It is one I think education in this society in this country is going to have to address and look at over a long period of time.

Mr. Reycraft: I agree. My concern, I guess, is that in your system students are taught about one specific religion and are not given an opportunity to gain an appreciation for others. I have some concern about that.

Mr. Ware: That is not quite true. We do teach about other religions. It is part of the curriculum in all our high schools.

Mr. Reycraft: In grade 11.

Mr. Ware: Yes.

Mr. Reycraft: Not all students who go through the educational system of this province get an opportunity to study world religions.

Mr. Ware: In our system, if they went through ours, they would.

Mr. Rooney: Mr. Reycraft, if I may, I think there is a sense of ecumenism that is inherent in all Catholic schools and that is rooted in a fundamental conviction of the worth of who the other person is and his God. That is fundamental to the Christian tradition. I believe that sense of tolerance, respect and understanding is in our schools.

Mr. Reycraft: If I wanted to be mischievous, I might suggest that leads me to my other question, which dealt with non-Catholics teaching in your schools, but I will not do that.

I did want, though, to get some information, if it is available. I recall the hearings in which I participated three years ago regarding the extension of funding to Catholic secondary schools. Much of that discussion focused on non-Catholics who were teaching in your system. I would like to know if there has been any significant change in the numbers of non-Catholics who are teaching, in either direction, since 1985.

1140

Mr. Rooney: There certainly are a number of non-Catholics, as there always has been, within the Catholic school structure in this province. Our association does not have available that kind of accurate information. From our voluntary members, there is obviously an awareness that not every administrator is a Catholic, but they

have an administrative responsibility in a Catholic high school.

Mr. Reycraft: Was it the trustees' association that I asked the same question of earlier? They too indicated they did not have the information available.

Madam Chairman: I wonder whether it is possible for that information to be made available for Mr. Reycraft.

Mr. Reycraft: Basically, what I am trying to get a handle on is whether there has been any change in the numbers or proportion of non-Catholics teaching in your system.

Mr. Rooney: The federations could provide that information.

Mr. Ware: That would be fairly readily available. I do not know whether you can ask that question.

Mr. Kutz: You are not supposed to be able to ask that question.

Mr. Reycraft: I am not supposed to be able to ask that question?

Mr. Kutz: We are not supposed to be able to ask that question in hiring.

Mr. Ware: Particularly when the people were transferred over as a result of Bill 30, you were not allowed to ask those questions.

Mr. Reycraft: OK. Perhaps there is a different question that could be asked to provide us with the same information. I will leave that for another time.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Continuing in the mischievous mood, one way would be to ask how many of them filed their priest's letter of recommendation that was often required.

Mr. Mooney: I want to say "pastoral letter." I want to correct you on that.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I want to follow up on this. I have some difficulties in the thrust. The only anecdotal information I have is that the number of non-Catholics who actually transferred to the other system is very, very small. It was mostly Catholics, in the other system who took the opportunity.

I have noticed quite a switch in the language that is being used by not necessarily your association, because I cannot recall that one, but I do remember the trustees being before us on Bill 30. There was the lack of threat to the existence within the system that seemed to be seen at that stage, which was a concern of a certain number of non-Catholics; as you say, even some administrators. One can imagine how dangerous that might be in this day and age.

The kind of language that was being put forward during that period of extension was that the system had developed in a much more sophisticated, entrenched way. The system is reflected by, in fact, the whole bringing in of Bill 30, and the Catholicity of the system is really not dependent on exclusivity of Catholic instructors. Yet the language in the brief from the trustees the other day was that it was fundamental that somehow a child who might have the unfortunate occasion of having one non-Catholic teacher and one less Catholic to turn to in a time of crisis—that was the way it was pitched to us, which I found incredibly regressive in its notions of the strength of the inherent mission of the system and the general tenor of the schools.

I see this in the language that you are putting forward today, although not quite as strongly, in the notion that the repeal of section 136-1a is somehow necessary for the guarantee that the nature of the system will be maintained—that somehow there will be a flood of Protestants and, God knows, even an atheist or two who wants to go in there and undermine the system or something—rather than saying that you are very capable of maintaining the system with your present powers of hiring, which are quite enormous for a person to be able to find out whether or not somebody is going to fit into the system well, and the normal expectations that we have in the rest of society or in the Human Rights Code it is possible now to expect of the Catholic system as well, without any threat to its capacity to operate.

I am interested in the change of emphasis that I notice now coming from all the Catholic groups that come before us, except the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, at this point. I would be interested in your comments.

Mr. DiRocco: Personally, I do not see any change. Speaking from my own vantage point, I felt the same way earlier, before the passing of the bill, that if there was, if you like, a threat to a particular mode of educating young people, it would not come from without but in fact from within, and the only way you maintain your strength within is to make sure of who these people are who join your ranks.

I am not speaking on behalf of this body, but speaking personally, I do not think that I would apologize for feeling that the people I want teaching my children in the schools that purport to be Catholic in vision ought to be Catholic believers. I do not think I would ask someone who does not believe in those particular tenets, doctrines, dogmas, way of living, to be up there

and acting in a certain fashion or behaving in a certain way or speaking in a certain manner that gives other than the vision you want to get across to these young people. That is a point of view, and I do not really apologize for that.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Of course, there is a contradiction in what you are saying. We are really mixing up what somebody's fundamental beliefs might be and the whole notion of professionalism and working within the mission of your particular system.

For instance, let me pose some pretty nasty questions around this, if I might, because this really does bug me a lot. Which would you prefer in your system, a Protestant who happened to follow the Vatican's notions of birth control or a teacher who, like the majority of the Catholic population, uses birth control, which is not supported by the Vatican? Which would you prefer in your system, a Protestant right-to-lifer or a Catholic who believes in some form of choice, against the church's teachings, and yet neither of them would necessarily be proselytizing in your system about their particular points of view but working within the mission?

Mr. Rooney: I will make a couple of opening comments, and I know John wants to jump in.

First of all, we want to hire the best teacher to meet the needs of the kids. We would prefer the priority be on a Catholic. We are not here to judge their moral background. That is not our job; that is not our responsibility. We are committed to young kids and informing them of what we really believe.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Agreed.

Mr. Rooney: All right. So at the outset, that is where we are coming from, philosophically, very practically. Can she teach? How well does she teach? What are the needs I have within my school? They are the issues I am concerned about.

Will they motivate kids? Will they be good role models in terms of a whole host of other issues? Do they love learning and do they love the learner? Those are key questions.

Sure, I am going to ask about belief, but I am not here to judge who you are as a person. That is not in the responsibility. Sure, I expect if you join us, you will obviously be supportive to our beliefs. That is a natural expectation.

I would like to invite John to make a comment on this issue as well, and I will come back.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I do not disagree with anything you have said at this point. I agree with a lot that you said.

Mr. Ware: Who I disagree with here I am not entirely sure. I think what we are doing is talking about a question of philosophy and the rights in hiring.

When I started teaching a number of years back, I think most of the Catholic high schools had a number of non-Catholics on staff. I am talking about the late 1950s and the early 1960s. The situation we are going to get into in the early 1990s is that we are going to have a major shortage of teachers. On my present staff I have a number of non-Catholics who came across as a result of Bill 30, and I would say that it is basically a question of philosophy. I think if you can buy the Christian philosophy, the philosophy of the school, then there is really no difficulty.

Of course, in that transition period when we were talking about hiring people and moving them across from their coterminous board, we really were not allowed to ask questions that relate to religion or philosophy, which becomes a major problem. I have no difficulties with having the Anglican or the Baptist or anyone else on a staff, even some of the other non-Christian religions, as long as I understand where the person is coming from philosophically.

I really think we have to ensure the right to hire and to question people on where they are coming from. I particularly do not want to have to hire someone on a staff who might espouse a position that is diametrically opposed to the position of the church. I think that is a thing that you have to ensure too.

1150

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Again, I would just suggest to you that there are people in the Catholic church who see a much greater threat from some people teaching in religion faculties who are liberation theologians and who do not see the role as Archbishop Ambrozic sees it. The greater threat comes from that internal schism, if I can put it that way, than from some person who is willing to be very quiet about what his beliefs are and just operate within your system, attending the masses and other kinds of activities you may wish to undertake but not particularly divulging his own particular philosophy.

I think there is a real lack of sophistication in this notion that this is the solution to your difficulty rather than the fact that your system, as a growing, changing system, as the church is growing and changing, is going to reflect those kinds of dialectics that are going to take place. That is a positive thing, having a few non-Catholics in the system. I would be somebody who would favour the promotion of the dialectic

taking place rather than the suppression of it, but what I am tending to see now is a move in the other direction, which I really worry about when you start talking about your commitment to ecumenism and that sort of thing.

Mr. Rooney: Maybe you should check that out with those who teach in our schools, to see if in fact it is true, if it is just a perception or a real fear that they are going to become kind of a unilateral or univision type of institution. Life is not like that, political parties are not like that, families are not like that, schools are not like that. They handle that diversity.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That is my argument. They can handle that diversity very well and they should not be threatened by it because the general thrust will be—well, there is no sense getting into a long debate on this.

There are a couple of other matters I had some concerns about which I am just going to raise, if I might.

Madam Chairman: Before you go on, I think Mr. Mahoney had a supplementary on that very point. You did not want to prolong the debate, but we are.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Go ahead.

Mr. Mahoney: It is a supplementary that comes from a little different angle. The concern that I have is with this attitude that Mr. Johnston has put forward, his concerns about the seeming shift, that now that Bill 30 is over, let's go back at some of the things that we perhaps gave in to.

I have seen a situation in my own community where both school boards have passed resolutions saying they will not hire anyone who does not support the system financially. In other words, you must indicate that your taxes go to the separate school board or go to the public school boards. That is not just for teachers; that is for the janitor, the secretary, everybody. We really are, I think, at a time in society, running a risk of real polarization of us against them, of Catholic against non-Catholic in the school system, with the proposal of abolishing that section of the act, which was agreed to, I understand. I was not involved in the debate at that time. Maybe Mr. Johnston could tell me. They had a 10-year lifespan on the agreement between the parties.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The notion was that for the transition period there would be protection for all those moving and that after that period the Human Rights Code would, hopefully, apply.

Mr. Mahoney: OK. I am not even comfortable with the decision that both of my boards made to require that declaration, to require that

transfer of financial allegiance to get a job, and it would not even necessarily have to be teaching job. I am not sure it is legal. I am not sure it fits within the codes of this country, but there it is. I see a real danger of polarization, bigotry and all of those kinds of terrible feelings that we hope would not come into this country. I just wonder if you have any comments.

Mr. Rooney: I come from a county where the coterminous boards work together. We have a co-operative education program. It is mutually staffed and housed, and we work together on it. I do not think we are that far apart in terms of distance either.

Mr. DiRocco: I think it is fair that it will vary across the province. In my own neck of the woods, north of Metro, we likewise have a very good working relationship between the two boards, the coterminous boards. Likewise, we have special co-operation agreements of an academic nature. Sometimes we use similar kinds of officers, technicians and library services. We share a lot of resources together. There has always been very good co-operation between the two boards in location of schools, exchange of properties where we thought that perhaps in this particular area the public board might be more advantageously placed, whether high school or an elementary school, and vice versa. They have done the same thing with us.

Mr. Mahoney: With respect, those are business arrangements that can always be worked out. In the case of the example I have cited, those same kinds of business arrangements exist. It is very amicable, and they wave to each other in the morning as they go into their offices.

Mr. DiRocco: No. It is referring to the same things you are concerned about.

Mr. Mahoney: I am talking about the hiring of staff; hiring teachers and management staff within the school.

Mr. DiRocco: Well, in my own schools in the three high schools that I have been involved with in the past eight years, I have had non-Catholic teachers, that I personally recommended and hired.

Going back to Mr. Johnston's query earlier on about having such people in your schools, my secretaries have been non-Catholics. Some of our custodians are non-Catholics, and I am certain that in the public system in the same region there are Catholics working for them. In fact, we have not seen anything like what you have described, but I will say that depends on which part of the province and what kind of

relationship the boards have had in the past, as well, whether they maintain the degree of co-operation I would like to see.

But I would say that that kind of development would be very unfortunate for this province and this country.

Mr. Mahoney: So it is one that your association would not be in favour of?

Mr. DiRocco: No.

Mr. Ware: Emotions are relatively high in exchanging the schools at present and it does seem to make some sense off the top, if you are employed by a board to direct your taxes to the board. I think that does make sense. There has got to be exceptions to that kind of thinking. We are going to get into such a teacher shortage, I would suggest, in the 1990s, that I think that kind of legislating will be gone and gone fairly quickly. This is going to be a very changing world that we are going to go into and let us hope that those kind of animosities will disappear very quickly.

Mr. Rooney: As one final supplement, if I may to Richard's question, I don't see us shifting at all. I do not see that shift you see.

Interjections.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I was going to say I cannot tell about your association. I cannot remember. I do remember the trustees for the Catholic system.

Interjections.

Mr. Ware: We saw no major fear of hiring non-Catholic teachers into our system. That was in our original brief too, but we still wanted to have the control of the hiring and wanted to be able to ask questions which we felt were significant.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Johnston, we have about five minutes left in the presentation time.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I do not want to prolong the debate at all about how other questions can be asked to achieve the same purposes without saying that you want to be separate from the Human Rights Code. There were a number of things that I wished we had more time on, just in terms of the placement of some of the things you have done. I was a little concerned when you placed under the whole question of slow learners, the question of immigration or compulsory minimal language mastery within a year and you put that under the slow learner section. It sort of jumped out at me as an unfortunate placement.

I also would love to have gotten into a bit of a debate about the Radwanski notion which I see,

the second last one, the defense of the economy and part-time student labour. In my view there are two sides of that. We are hearing that a lot of kids in poor families are part of their economic unit and that is a crucial part of their lives. Then there are a lot of kids who, unfortunately, in our acquisitional society are out there, middle-classers, spending far too much time working at McDonald's to buy all the things that give them status in society. We really need when we discuss that to understand that if somebody came from a farm background and spent a lot of hours working and in transit back and forth every day, the kinds of limitations on work that Radwanski talks about and which seemed to be implicit there, are ones that bore no relationship to my life. They would have made my life impossible, as a farm kid.

Madam Chairman: I understand that the association has indicated that they will be presenting in September, so perhaps we could put through some of those points at a later date.

Thank you. We have two speakers left, Mrs. O'Neill and Mr. Cooke.

1200

Mrs. O'Neill: I would like to go to the brief, pages 7 and 8. I find some of your ideas about special education rather different and somewhat interesting. You are talking at the bottom of folio 7 about special education credit programs. Would you say a little about that? I do not know whether you are relating to basic-level courses or something beyond or different than that.

Mr. Rooney: I think I will let Stan have the first run at this one.

Mr. Kutz: I think what we are referring to specifically are students who are withdrawn for some part of the school day into a resource room setting where they receive special help in one or other of their regular credit subjects. What we are looking at here is the possibility of students who need that kind of help, especially in a fairly ongoing and substantial way, gaining credits towards a diploma through the work they do in the resource centre. At the present time, that is not within the purview—

Mrs. O'Neill: Are you then talking about some basic level of credit in literacy or numeracy?

Mr. Kutz: Probably, yes. I did not write this section. I cannot really speak for the author of it, but I would think, yes.

Mrs. O'Neill: OK. I will leave that for now, then. On the next page, page 8, I found that rather interesting observation about the textbook manu-

facturers. How much work have you done with that group, or have you presented this to anyone beyond ourselves at the moment?

Mr. Rooney: Right here is the first time. It is just one of those practical things you observe as you write the programs. Where do you get resources that the student can read and study?

Mrs. O'Neill: So you are talking here, at the moment, about students who have difficulty with literacy and numeracy and the lack of textbooks. They would also apply, I presume, to textbooks that would be provided for the visually impaired, the mentally retarded and all of the disabilities. You find that you are having a lot of difficulty with visual resources. Is that correct?

Mr. Rooney: Yes.

Mrs. O'Neill: There do seem to be a lot of appliances out there, as I know, but it is the textbook area where you are finding a real lack of support.

Mr. Rooney: Right. Teachers and resource faculty members are out there creating and generating the material because a lot of times it cannot be purchased.

Mrs. O'Neill: OK. The other item I found interesting, which I think already exists in some settings, but I have not seen, is the term "family style units". I am wondering how closely, or if at all, that is related to "peer twinning."

Mr. Rooney: It probably could be the same.

Mrs. O'Neill: What is your concept when you talk about family style?

Mr. Rooney: Schools are organized on a variety of structures, such as on ability level exclusively. But in supporting the aspect of integration, we hope that we could have students, and not just all the minor-niners together, and the Grade 13s or Ontario academic course students together, but bring them together across perceived grade level and ability level and put them in that kind of an integrated construct to build, learn and teach each other.

Mrs. O'Neill: Within that you would build supports within the student body to support those, or integration.

Mr. Rooney: Yes. Part of that is just the incredible peer pressure kids are under at every age and every perceived grade.

Mrs. O'Neill: OK. I would ask you gentlemen to pursue each of those three items, particularly if you are saying this is the first time you put them on paper.

Mr. Rooney: Pages 6 and 8?

Mrs. O'Neill: We have not heard a lot in this area. I think it is an important area and I feel that it would be helpful to have some support from an organization with the breadth of experience you have, putting some of those ideas forward through your associations to both the ministry, the minister himself and any other channels you can think of besides this committee, because they are not going to come about really quickly.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: On the top of page 6 you make comments about the technical, vocational education that I would just like you to expand on so that I can understand exactly what you are saying the role of the Catholic school system should be in this field.

Mr. Rooney: I am going to ask Stan to handle that.

Mr. Kutz: You will notice that reflection is phrased in the negative. First of all, the Catholic system is quite new to any substantial technical-vocational type of training or education, because most of our high schools, prior to full funding, were in a situation where they could only handle essentially an academic-type program. So we are very much learning.

What we are keenly aware of from our contact with our colleagues in the public system who have much more experience is that there has been an increasing tendency over several years—and it seems to have been greatly heightened by the Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions curriculum guidelines—for students not to choose those courses.

In part at least the reason for that is that it is not possible for school systems to keep up to the state of the art in terms of the equipment. The costs of providing technical-vocational training in the schools are simply prohibitive because of the expense of keeping current with the kind of equipment you would need to have.

Our vision, I guess, would be that while we want students to have the capabilities of concrete learning so that not all the emphasis is on a rather narrow, academic vision of what an educated person is really about, we feel that is likely going to be accomplished more through co-operative education, through linkage programs or possibly through apprenticeships, rather than through any new expenditure on technical and vocational courses as such in the schools.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: You will understand that one of the concerns and one of the arguments that the public secondary system expresses is that because of the extreme high cost and the fact that it is not offered, by and large, in the Catholic school system at this point, it is not a terribly fair

system, in that the public school system has to educate and accept high-cost students, many of whom may happen to be Catholic students and would go to the Catholic system if this type of education was offered in your system.

Instead, the public system accepts those students; yet your system wants access to industrial and commercial assessment. If the public system has to offer this education and your system does not, that would be a terribly unfair burden on the public school taxpayer versus the separate school taxpayer.

Mr. Rooney: I think a couple of us would like to take a crack at that.

Mr. Ware: That whole evolution on the technical side has changed tremendously. Again, look at the 1960s when there was a big expansion with federal moneys. Even our public school counterparts are looking again at the whole aspect of and approach to technical education. They are starting to deliver, through co-operative education modes, technical education too. The plumbing shops, the wiring shops and the labs that were so prevalent in the 1970s are now really having great difficulties updating and keeping up the state of the art too.

This is something that does not come necessarily from this group, but perhaps we should be looking at putting the resources in the high-technology area of the public school boards, the Catholic school boards and the community colleges together in some form of high-technology centres that could be accessible to all people in the community. Again, we cannot have three or four elements in our society competing for the same type of very limited resource.

I suggest to you that the public schools do not have much in the way of this high technology either. This is a whole area that has to be looked at and one that should be explored.

Mr. Rooney: Part of it, I think, is the historical setting. A lot of the industrial arts facilities have already been in place, especially since the late 1960s and early 1970s. That is a fact. It is not that we do not want to.

There are a couple of cautions. First, we are not really interested in duplicating facilities. We need to be accountable to those people who are paying the freight. Second, my sense of our community and business is that they want to do the workplace training themselves. I hear in my dialogues in our own community, members of the local chamber, saying, "Look, you get them ready and have these kinds of skills in place."

Perhaps philosophically what the community must wrestle with is this one issue. There are two

or three others, but local autonomy versus provincial jurisdiction governance to me is at the nub of what I hear you saying. I do not believe we want to dodge that one at all. We need to be accountable to who the ratepayers are.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: It is not just accountability. It is the fact that if the public school system is offering this type of education, which is higher-cost, smaller class sizes are part of it, and the capital expenditure—there is replacement of equipment. Then if you are on exactly the same local tax base, if you have residential, commercial and industrial, and that is extended, the effect would be that the public ratepayers would have to pay a higher rate of tax because they would be paying for a different type of a system than a primarily academic system which is not as expensive. So the public ratepayers would be paying a higher rate of tax.

Mr. Rooney: That is not what we are saying. We are willing to meet the needs of our students and the needs of the community we are in—we are saying that clearly—but we are not out to simply duplicate facilities that are there.

I can give you a very personal experience. I did not have a grade 12 auto shop, and we were able to work out an arrangement with our coterminous board to buy the use of time. I do not believe we need to go to our community and say: "God, we have the right now to have that. Give me the latest in auto." I do not believe that is being responsible or reactive to our kids' needs. But I do believe we owe our coterminous board the responsibility to say, "Look, there is a shop here"—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Without a Catholic shop teacher? I do not know.

Mr. Rooney: You would not believe it. We made more novenas than you could imagine.

Mr. Kutz: I would like us not to lose the focus that we were trying to create in this particular part of the brief. The difficulties are not only

financial, either province-wide or as between the two school systems; the difficulties are also in terms of what students are prepared to choose today. There has been a vast decline within the public system, even where they have more or less adequate equipment, just in the number of students choosing the courses. Courses are dying.

In that context, I hoped we could focus a little bit on the preamble that leads up to that particular observation in our brief. That is to say, surely if we are talking about education in a larger context here and for a long-term future in Ontario, the expectation that is out there, created by all of us—teachers, parents, everybody, the media, the government, politicians—is that everybody has an equal chance.

Now that the same curriculum is offered to everyone, everyone has the possibility of going to university or college and that is really the entrée to the good life in Ontario. That has to be compared with the statistical fact that about 70 per cent of students never will and if we either changed our entrance requirements or whatever to enable, let us say, 70 per cent to enter instead of 70 per cent not to enter, we would have to build dozens of new universities and colleges and we would not have jobs for them when they finished.

We are creating in Ontario an extraordinarily unreal expectation for students and the situation is set up in a way that more or less predicts that a majority will fail in terms of the larger societal expectation. We are really not dealing with that majority in any meaningful way, and I think it is extraordinarily important that a committee that is taking as broad a look at education as this committee is, should really look into that issue.

Madam Chairman: I would like to thank the association for appearing before our committee today.

The committee recessed at 12:14 p.m.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The committee resumed at 2:08 p.m. in room 151.

Madam Chairman: I would like to open this afternoon's session of the select committee on education. Our first presenter this afternoon is from the Ontario Council of Regents for Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology. We welcome Charles Pascal. We understand you do not have a written brief.

Dr. Pascal: Not as yet.

Madam Chairman: We shall wait with bated breath for your words of wisdom orally.

Dr. Pascal: That makes two of us. I will be pleased to put something in writing, in particular if my organization, which is the council of regents, advisory to the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mrs. McLeod), affords me the opportunity to come back in the fall. I am very pleased to have received the invitation.

CHARLES E. PASCAL

Dr. Pascal: I would like to try to do about four things in about 20 or 25 minutes and have at least 15 minutes or so to talk with your committee. The first thing I would like to do is begin with a confession. Then I would like to table a few assumptions and biases that this particular educator brings to the discussion. I would like to make a few brief comments about what I think should be included among the list of goals of education. I would like to conclude with a letter to my daughter, and I will explain that after I have done the first three things.

I do not know whether you have had any letters written to children presented as part of your proceedings, but I have a letter I wrote to my daughter, Jennifer, nine years ago which I would like to read again. It is something I have to read to someone at least every nine years.

The confession I would begin with is that I was a member of the secondary education review project steering committee, so I was in SERPitude for a couple of years and this affords me an opportunity to give my minority report, which I am pleased to do.

Having dealt with my first item, which is that modest confession, I would like to table a few assumptions and biases that I bring to any discussion of philosophies and goals of education. I assume from your letter, Madam Chairman, that you know the remarks I make today are mine; they are not the remarks of the council of

regents for the colleges. If we do come back in the fall, the "we" will be a real "we," rather than the royal "we," so to speak.

Another assumption I guess we share is that before any of us who are looking at education from a public policy view looks at specific policy implications of an issue such as streaming, it is important that we begin with a very general values-driven discussion about the philosophy and goals of education, and that this precede any pragmatic look at a specific issue.

I applaud you and your colleagues on the committee, Madam Chairman, for bringing together people one at a time and inviting groups to talk more generally rather than from the point of view of a special issue or interest. I assume that all those who have been before you have resisted making comments on specific issues. However pragmatic we are in terms of our own particular issue of the day or the month, it is important to step back and look at the broader context. We agree with that. Without that, I am afraid there are far too many solutions in search of problems as part of the discussion. That is an assumption I wanted to table.

The other assumption that is dear to my heart in terms of the way we look at a set of challenges, such as reviewing and renewing our education system, is that the process must be part of the product; that is, the manner in which we, whether the "we" is a task force set up by the Minister of Colleges and Universities—our own minister is about to announce some time in the early fall a process that our council will be leading and co-ordinating called Vision 2000 which will review and renew the colleges' mandate. As part of that process, we will be partaking in a lot of activity which is designed to be part of the results, part of the report; that is, if the Ontario college system is to remain an innovative instrument of social and economic policy, we want the process for reviewing the college system's mandate to continue teaching the system to be strategic and to think in terms that will keep it vital and vigorous.

Another example I would use in terms of process and product goes back to my time on the SERP steering committee. Several years ago—it seems like several decades ago—we are discussing various issues on the SERP committee. This was the pre-Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions commission. Should we eliminate grade 13? Many of us joined the steering

committee with a little bit of scepticism. We wanted to know whether elimination of grade 13 was a solution in search of a problem and whether we were part of something that was there to bless it, independent of what society at large needed or society at large wanted.

In the midst of this, one of us said, as perhaps one of your members may have said during a discussion of procedures, "Let's talk about the goals of education before we talk about grade 13 or any other specific issues." Someone who was acting as the resource secretariat from the Ministry of Education said, "We have some goals," and the educators on the steering committee had never seen "The Goals of Education."

I think we have all seen those. You have seen them in your schools and colleges and universities. They are usually in the board rooms, beautifully framed goal statements. They are a nice statement of goals. The problem is that those goals were written by five or six very fine individuals from the Ministry of Education in a hotel room. They were asked to write those and not come out until they had some, for reasons of political expectations or the need for the province to have goals. They were written. They are a fine list.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: What about the room service?

Dr. Pascal: Mr. Johnston, I do not have any recollection of that nor do I have the receipts from the room service.

The reason I use those goals of education as examples is not because the results were not very good, but because we as a society and a group of concerned individuals did not engage in a deliberate, explicit discussion about the goals of education and the assumptions and the pragmatic outcomes that flow from that discussion. As you review both the philosophy and the goals of education, I know you will continue reinforcing the notion that the process is indeed part of the product. Education indeed is a process, and I label myself a progressive educator. As such, what that means to me is that education is not just here to preserve the status quo, but should be designed to bring about a society we dream about.

Rosemary Brown, who used to be a politician in British Columbia and is now a member of academe, said at the national forum on post-secondary education in October that everything we do in education, our successes and failures, regardless of what level, what particular part of the panel we are talking about, must be evaluated

against the backdrop of the three most important social issues of today and tomorrow, namely, equality, peace and the quality of life. We need to talk about those issues and what they mean in very pragmatic terms in terms of the reality of the classroom.

As a group of educators and politicians, when we look at four or five issues—I know you will proceed to that deliberate look in the fall—we need to talk about philosophy of education, but we also need to look at the whole of education. We cannot just look at the elementary and secondary panels. We cannot look at things like streaming and attrition without looking at linkages and the articulated challenges that are there for the offing in terms of school-to-work transition and school-to-college/university transition. We must look at the larger picture.

That is the reason I will cease and desist from speaking explicitly and deliberately about the Ontario college system. Every bone in my body wishes to take advantage of this opportunity to tell you how proud I am about this 21-year-old success story. Even as I think about the 21 years and the 110,000 full-time students and 800,000 part-time students currently enrolled in our 22 colleges, I must admit I gave three or four milliseconds to forgetting what I said and going on to tell you more about it, but I am going to resist. I want to talk more generally about education, because I think that is what your committee has asked me and others to do.

A few comments about my philosophy of education and then my letter to my daughter Jennifer: For those of you who just joined us, you might find that a strange insertion into a distinguished gathering of politicians looking at an important topic, but I am going to share a letter I wrote to my daughter nine years ago.

Before I do, education to me, regardless of your agenda of goals and your particular philosophy, should be about dignity, vision and innovation. I will speak to those very briefly, and perhaps more elaborately if and when my colleagues and I have an opportunity to return in the fall.

When we talk about building a system around dignity, we are talking about designing a system that catches people, in particular students, doing things right. We are talking about building a system which guarantees success. In the context in which we discuss this right now, Mr. Radwanski and others have called attention to an extraordinary social phenomenon, which finds itself in the attrition figures noted in his report and other reports, including Ken Dryden's very

passionate, stream-of-consciousness report as youth commissioner of a few years ago, which has not been given the attention it deserves. I hope all members of your committee have taken the time to read his report and perhaps have even discussed the report with him. If you have not, I think you would enjoy that opportunity.

Dignity to me means building a system around respect, success and self-confidence, both as people and learners. Again, we are talking about students. We are also talking about those who lead students—teachers—and those who lead the teachers. We are talking about respect for individual differences and building a system around the individual differences that students bring as strengths rather than weaknesses.

As I talk about concepts such as dignity, vision and innovation, I am mindful of the fact that my pragmatic self, which is about 95 per cent of who I am, wants to talk in great detail about what that means in the classroom. Time today does not afford it, but I assure you that each of these words can find tangible and practical meaning in the reality of our classrooms in Ontario.

1420

When I talk about vision, I am talking about teaching people to think strategically. I am talking about teaching people, through what we do and what we say and how we behave, to take the larger view and the longer view and its impact on how we get from here to there. I am talking about the manner in which we teach young people to create vision.

I am not talking about designing an education system which creates visionaries. I have not met too many people I would classify as visionaries in my lifetime. Oh, one meets a Robert McClure or a Tommy Douglas from time to time, and as an undergraduate student I heard Martin Luther King give a talk or two. But I have met a lot of people who are capable of creating vision, who have taught themselves or who have been taught to think strategically and to ask questions about the impact of this particular social issue on me, and in an interdependent sense, on me and my neighbours.

I am talking about our education system teaching people to create vision, and therefore to develop personal options for their own growth and development for careers, and in an interdependent sense, to create options for our society at large.

Finally, innovation: Our education system must do a far better job of teaching people to independently and interdependently act creatively, divergently and gracefully in the face of

challenge and change. We need far more innovation. We need far more independent learning options. We need to teach people how to act independently and creatively.

In the education system, someone ought to do a pendulum-swing study of the fads we have known over the years. Maybe this is grist for a PhD or a doctor of education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education or some other graduate institution. I know Hall and Dennis, obviously, are the victims of many of the observations many of us make about the good old days vis-à-vis what kids can or cannot do right now. I am not sure how much is myth and how much is reality, but when we try to design education systems that produce independent behaviour, sometimes we need structure on how to teach independent behaviour and we need to develop systematic ways of removing structure.

If you want to teach independence, then we are going to have to do something deliberate about it, but innovation in teaching people how to deal with the challenge of an ever-changing world of work and an ever-changing world, period, is something we ought to take far more seriously.

All these things you have heard before. We have certainly read them in preambles to other task forces and other committees looking at education in this province and other provinces, but what we do in terms of taking concepts such as dignity and vision, teaching people to think strategically and teaching people how to be innovative, lifelong learners and translating that into curriculum and into the professional development programs of teachers and principals and vice-principals is entirely another thing.

Let me conclude this part with a few quotes.

"One core value, then, essential to realizing our future on our own terms is innovation or innovative learning, but how well do we make good on these statements? Do we live our respective and collective vision statements by what we measure, control and reinforce in our institutions and, most importantly, by our behaviour with colleagues and students?"

Let me quote from a book by Ronald S. Barth called *Run, School, Run*, in which he says:

"Probably nothing within a school has more impact on students in terms of skill development, self-confidence and classroom behaviour than the personal and professional growth of teachers. When teachers individually and collectively examine, question and reflect on their ideals and develop new practices that lead towards those ideals, the school and its inhabitants are alive.

When teachers stop growing, so do their students."

Let me give you a quote by Peter Drucker. This does not feel too good, I must say, as a former college administrator and someone who continues to teach in public institutions. Drucker has said recently:

"Public service institutions will have to learn to be innovators, to manage themselves entrepreneurially. To achieve this, public service institutions will have to learn to look upon social, technological, economic, and demographic shifts as opportunities in a period of rapid change in all these areas. Otherwise, they will become obstacles. The public service institutions will increasingly become unable to discharge their mission as they adhere to programs and projects that cannot work in a changed environment, and yet they will not be able or willing to abandon the missions they can no longer discharge. Increasingly, they will come to look the way the feudal barons came to look after they had...nothing left but the power to obstruct and to exploit; they will become self-righteous while increasingly losing their legitimacy."

Please do not tell my fellow former college and university administrators that I said that to you. I did not say it. I was just quoting Drucker.

It has a rather nasty conclusion in terms of the consequence of us not developing a renewing capability in our education system and, again, this is my point about process being product. We need to make less necessary select committees on education by constructing a set of institutions that have a capability to renew themselves in ways that we need perhaps to see more evidence of from time to time.

I conclude with a letter to my daughter, Jennifer Pascal. The date of this letter is June 12, 1979. Jennifer was nine then. She is now 18. The letter was an open letter to my daughter on the occasion of convocation at the University of Toronto where I was asked to deliver a convocation address and, for reasons that will be explained in the letter, I felt uncomfortable doing something traditional. This letter has been read once before, on that occasion, and my daughter has read it twice, once nine years ago and once yesterday. She told me yesterday she is now beginning to understand. That is not her fault because parents are teachers; it is my fault.

"Dear Jenny:

"I suppose you are wondering why I am writing a letter to you. Let me explain. I have some important things to say to you and they concern your education, present and future. As

you know, your daddy usually deals with things he thinks are important by assuming that serious face, saying, 'Jenny, I would like to speak with you.'

"Since you are only nine, the subject of our chats often deals with the way you treat your brother, Jesse, or the way you should treat him at least. However, there are two reasons why I would like to set down my thoughts in a slightly more orderly fashion.

"First of all, I want you to keep these remarks. They may take on greater meaning as you grow older, so humour me by putting this letter in your scrapbook. Before you do, you might practise your reading and vocabulary. I love and respect your ability to say, 'Daddy, what does that mean?'

"Secondly, the president of the university asked me to speak at a graduation ceremony, which we call convocation. During the ceremony, university students will be presented with the various degrees which are symbols for achieving a certain level of education. I will tell you more about degrees in a moment.

"Usually, they call these speeches convocation addresses, but the ones I have heard are more like sermons." I apologize to members of the committee who may have given a convocation address within the last couple of months during convocation season.

"I am supposed to say something important in 15 minutes or so, and while a sermon is probably appropriate, I will not know most of the people there. Somehow, I do not think I would feel comfortable preaching to strangers, but maybe they will not mind if I exercise the parental prerogative and give you a little lecture."

This was in the Year of the Child or the Year of the Youth about nine years ago, and I am not sure I had the right to give a sermon during that particular year, even to my own kids.

"If you do not mind, Jennifer, I will read this letter to them. Getting back to degrees, do you remember when you heard someone refer to me as Dr. Pascal, and I explained to you that the doctor referred to a degree, a PhD, and that I received this symbol because I studied hard and, more importantly, I was able to pass tests and write. You also know that the only time I ever refer to myself as doctor is when I am making restaurant reservations.

"Three weeks ago, I was giving a speech, not a sermon, and my host gave me a very nice introduction. He said that I received my education at a particular university where I received my BA, my MA and my PhD—these are all degrees,

Jenny—and I politely corrected him, pointing out that while I had received these three degrees, I was still attempting to continue my education in spite of all the knowledge that is associated with these symbols.

"Jenny, we recently discussed the election"—I cannot remember what election that was—"and from time to time"—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I remember.

Dr. Pascal: Mr. Johnston has a better memory than me. I cannot recall which one. I am not sure if it was federal or provincial.

"We recently discussed the election and from time to time we have talked about the problems facing our society. I think our society, in general, and our political system and our institutions are suffering from a disease I call hardening of the categories. More people seem to know a lot about a little; more and more people seem to be selfish and a bit too protective of what they have and a bit too proud about what they know. I guess I can understand the situation. We do face many problems and I guess it is natural for people to behave like this.

"The sad thing is that the solutions to the problems we face and the problems you and your generation will face require statesmanship, and by that I mean the ability of people to make personal and collective decisions about what is good for the society at large, not just for themselves or their category of experience. While the statesmanship stuff is in short supply, a thing called scapegoating is on the rise. Scapegoating is when we are quick to blame others for something, rather than looking at our part in the scheme of things. It is when we are too quick to put our view of things ahead of others, just because it is our view.

1430

"Jenny, I know you have often discussed with me what you want to do when you grow up. There are exciting possibilities for you because you are blessed with many natural talents, but I am more concerned with what you will be when you grow up, not just what you will do. Because I am a bit older than you, I know what I would like to be, if and when I ever grow up. I would like both of us to be able to consider what is best for other people, not just what is in our own best interest. I would like us to be good citizens, not just good Canadian citizens, but responsible individuals in a troubled world." In today's context, I would talk about making the myth of multiculturalism a reality.

"It is great to love humanity, but I would also like us to like people, to find value in who they

are and what they know. I would like us to be able to deal gracefully and securely with ambiguity and complexity and I would like us to avoid being too proud about what we already know and place more value on what we have yet to learn.

"Let us not be stupid people, Jenny, for they are people who have no respect for wisdom. They refuse to learn new things. You can find more on that in chapter 1 of Proverbs. Do not forget, this is a sermon. This is the kind of person I would like you to become; it is the kind of person I am working on. Amazing as it may seem, there are people like this, and many of our colleges and universities provide resources, activities and opportunities to assist us to become more like the type of person I have described.

"Often these resources and opportunities are collectively known as a liberal education in universities and general education in colleges. Right now many people are talking about this liberal or general education. What is it? When and why should someone have it? What subjects should form its curriculum? Personally, I do not quite understand that all liberal education experts seem to think that there are certain subjects you take at a certain period to become liberally or generally educated. In universities, they often refer to this liberal education period as your undergraduate years, but I will save an explanation of this until you are 11.

"When you are assumed to be liberally or generally educated, a lot like the person I have described, then you are free, so to speak, to learn how to do something. You are free to become an expert in some very specific area. The idea is to make us people first and then we can become carpenters, artists, psychologists and so on.

"It seems to me, Jenny, that if you and I are to become liberally educated people, that we should be able to continually evaluate what we learn in personal terms and in relation to the qualities which we value. If you take after your mother, you will have a natural interest in what we call the humanities and the arts. If this becomes the case, should you not also know something about technology to be liberally educated?

"I feel uncomfortable with the notion that liberal education is defined by specific subjects and that we treat it as though it has a beginning and an end. In my case, I am desperately trying to continue mine, even though I have taken courses in Latin, history and philosophy. Professor Whalley at Queen's University has said that liberal education is characterized not by a subject matter but by the ways of mind and action, thinking and doing and sharing it evokes.

"I am a bit confused on what these liberal education experts are saying, but I guess these discussions have been taking place for a number of years. A fellow from Greece by the name of Aristotle said the following a few years ago, about 340 BC, which was before I was born: 'In modern times, people's views about education differ.'" "In modern times"—I love that, in 340 BC.

"There is no general agreement about what the young should learn in relation to moral virtue or success in life, nor is it clear whether education should be more concerned with training the intellect or the character.' Contemporary events have made the problem more difficult and there is no certainty whether education should be primarily vocational, moral or cultural. People have recommended all three. Moreover, there is no agreement as to what sort of education does promote moral virtue."

I am going to skip to another quote in the letter by Professor Leacock:

"I do not mind confessing that for a long time past I have been very sceptical about the classics. I was myself trained as a classical scholar. It seemed the only thing to do with me at the time. I acquired such a singular facility in hamming Latin and Greek that I could take a page of either of them and distinguish which it was by merely glancing at it, and with the help of a dictionary and a pair of compasses, rip off a translation of it in less than three hours, but I never got any pleasure from it. I lied about it. At first I would lie through vanity and later I would lie through habit. Later still, because, after all, the classics were all that I had, I actually valued them. I said to people who knew no Greek that there was a sublimity, a majesty about Homer, which they could never hope to grasp, I hoped. From such talks my friends went away sad, but continued lying on my part brought its own reward in a sense of superiority, and I lied more."

"Well, Jenny, I hope you understand what I'm saying. Both of us must continue our learning, and bragging about what we already know isn't going to really help us to become good citizens.

"Even if you decide to go to a college or university, even when you have received your degree or diploma or certificate from a college, you will be allowed to continue your education after graduation, but that will be up to you. I like graduations. I think of them as checkpoints, an opportunity to assess where we've been and where we are in relation to where we'd like to be as people. They do represent for many of us an event to celebrate great personal achievements,

the creation of new knowledge and the assimilation of the accumulated wisdom of others who have gone before us. It is tempting at these moments to think that one's education has finally concluded.

"I read this poem last week, Jennifer. It was written by a fellow by the name of Mr. Tennyson. He said:

"The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:

The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs:
the deep

moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,

'Tis not too late to seek a newer world."

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much. I think your daughter is a very lucky girl. I hope my 10-year-old does not expect me to go home and write her a letter like that.

Mr. Keyes: I can recall a professor at Queen's University who had a doctorate in biology. People used to say, "Why do you insist on being called doctor?" He said: "I earned the title every bit as much as did a medical doctor. Therefore, I like to see it used." Perhaps it is the same with yourself. The effort put forward was probably equal to that of the medical fraternity.

I appreciate the comments you have made today, because I have been constantly berating the groups who appear before us that so much of their presentations has nothing to do with the philosophy of education, but rather the mechanics of it. They have been trying to show us how to correct the mechanics, and that is the next stage of what we are going to do. I think also the comments you made about the quote from Aristotle in 340 BC are as relevant today as when they were made. Also, you said what the ingredients of our system have to be. There is no doubt about any of those.

I guess what I am trying to get at next is that for two weeks we have been listening to a lot of presentations, and there does not seem to be too much disagreement. Some members of the committee will not agree with me, but there is not too much disagreement on the current aims of education, or goals, whichever you choose to use, the mission. But perhaps on the means to accomplish those, the words have been better than the acts, and the actions have not measured up to the mission. That is what you are suggesting we must be able to do as well.

What do you consider to be some of those major stumbling blocks that have occurred in preventing institutions—and those you represent are certainly included in this—from achieving the mission they write? It is easier to write the words

for what you want to do than it is to accomplish it.

Just quickly, in your own institutions, we had representatives of industry and business here this week who were very critical. While you can talk about the glowing successes, they were also letting us know of the failures of the system of community colleges to fulfil what they considered the role that they should fulfil. I am asking you to look at the stumbling blocks, as you see them, in a more general view, not only in your own institutions but also the secondary and elementary.

Dr. Pascal: I am going to resist the opportunity to comment on the example you gave, because I would want to be here for more than another 10 minutes and I could overstay my welcome even if I wanted to. Perhaps in the fall we can talk about the college system.

Quite frankly, using various vehicles that I have been involved with, whether it is my role in the national forum process that Brian Segal led in Saskatoon, where we worked for two years to try to get college and university individuals, labour and big and small business to talk strategically about the year 2000 and beyond and, in that context, what it means for post-secondary education, or from my experience on the secondary education review project and other commissions and task forces, I think we are very shy about having elaborate and deliberate discussions about philosophy and values.

The fact is that the goals exist, as I mentioned before—and I did not mean to be too cheeky about the fact that they do exist. They do exist and they are very well articulated and very well written. They were written, I think, under Dr. Stephenson's leadership, and that part of it was well done. What did not happen was a process that got parents and representatives from labour, business, industry and education together to talk far more deliberately about the values behind those goals and how important the rhetoric was in terms of tying it down in the classroom.

1440

Instead of spending all of our time on philosophy and goals, what we do is go through the motions to make it look good. I am not suggesting that is what you are doing at all. I am very hopeful that, given the amount of time you have invested, this is for real. But certainly in the secondary education review project, we spent no time whatsoever really talking about the year 2000.

In Saskatoon, with 700 distinguished representatives of all aspects of society, people wanted to talk about funding. Funding is an

enabling objective. We are talking about underfunding and streaming without a clear vision of where we are headed in terms of education and where education fits in the society at large in terms of Rosemary Brown's three, just to use three examples. I cannot think of anything more important than equality, peace and the quality of life. All those things have tangible meaning for what we do in the curriculum at all levels of the education system and what we do as teachers and educational leaders.

Put differently, what we should be developing is a sense of what I call visionary incrementalism, where we spend 90 per cent of our energy tying down the vision and then 10 per cent in terms of implementation. It becomes so crystal clear how we get from here to there; if we spend our time on the vision, we will be able to tie it down. I think, Mr. Keyes, it is a function of not having spent time on what the vision is and what it means. If we believe all the people who wrote in—75 per cent of the people who wrote in as part of the SERP process talked about whether they were representing small business. I think you are seeing the Canadian Federation of Independent Business representatives.

Regardless of the vantage point, we were all told about our young people and our experienced people, people coming back for retraining from the private sector, from the shop floor requiring retraining for the challenges ahead: "Give us someone who is an independent learner who knows how to learn, because the only thing we can predict about the future is change itself, so give us people who can gracefully deal with change."

Every submission seemed to have that theme, and yet we have in our schools, colleges and universities precious little opportunity to teach people how to develop learning objectives for things they are interested in and to develop a method of getting from here to there and evaluation techniques to evaluate how well I am doing as a learner with respect to this learning project.

I think it is an embarrassment as Canadians. Maybe it is a Canadian disease, not thinking beyond tomorrow morning, thinking beyond six months prior to the next election, if we think in political terms, or thinking beyond my term as a college president. You and I met when I was president of Sir Sandford Fleming College of Applied Arts and Technology in Peterborough. I think the problem is not focusing enough on where we are headed. I think if we engaged in a deliberate process and spent most of our energy

there, everything else would fall into place. That is just one response.

Mr. Keyes: It is a good response, because one of the disappointments I have about this committee in this stage is that we are not going to have the advantage of looking at a futurist, or whatever you want to call it—a visionary, perhaps—idea in order to really try to make some leaps towards the year 2000.

Dr. Pascal: If you just took equality, we could spend three hours this afternoon on equality and could generate about 20 or 30 “how abouts” that are very practical with respect to how we organize and deal with our education institutions. Under the heading of equality, we are talking about those individual differences. We are talking about multiculturalism. We are talking about sexism as we define it in 1988 in Ontario. We are talking about the salaries and wages across sex, gender and other demographic characteristics.

We are talking about turning those things around in the classroom. It has meaning with respect to what we do in terms of training teachers and developing leaders. We have precious little management and leadership training in our educational system. Of course, quality of life and peace would generate some very tangible things; so I agree with you that beginning with the future is a heck of a place to start.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I also agree that the goals that were established do not indicate there was a lot of superfluous room service sent up to that room. They are well thought out in terms of the individualist self-actualization that is involved.

I have been trying, through various people who have been coming before us, to get at the notion that in fact there are other principles upon which you base your education system. I like what you are saying today, that you want to put that in a context of some larger social goals around equality, just taking Rosemary Brown’s three and maybe some others, because out of those your dignity, vision and innovation also flow.

I think, from our perspective, we really need to be concerned about enunciating the context within which we see those self-actualization goals for individual students to come because if you do not do that, then you never overcome the poverty gap, you never give disabled people a real chance to participate fully and you allow the racism and sexism that has been inherent in the system for so long to be maintained.

I hope what I am hearing is that you think we should spend time trying to elaborate a context within which we then judge those goals for the turn of the century.

Dr. Pascal: Very much so. Our Vision 2000 process, which the minister will announce and elaborate on and give the specifics for in early September, will articulate a process that begins really in the year 2000 or 2005, in which we do articulate, in a vision-directed, values-based discussion, the major challenges facing society at large. In that context and in the context in which your colleagues the other day from the private sector made their comments, we will work backwards from the kind of society we would like to shape.

It is a very different view and approach from taking the givens, which we define through a good solid look in the rear-view mirror, projecting that past on to the future and making some minor modifications. I am not suggesting that once you craft a vision, you then make radical changes by next Thursday. That is why I used the phrase “visionary incrementalism.” If you know where you are going, every opportunity you have you can exploit in the most positive sense to get from here to there. If you do not know where you are going, any road will take you there.

Quite frankly, it matters not what you do with respect to the Radwanski report, whether you are talking about streaming or vocational studies; if you do not ground it in a very coherent vision of what we believe about the world of work and the values we place on certain kinds of work and whether we want to change some of that perspective, as I am wont to do, fresh from a recent trip to West Germany.

Any road will take you there. It matters not whether you decide this—in a discussion about Hall and Dennis, using them as the scapegoats for what they did a number of years ago in terms of the basics of today, it will not matter. We will be able to see the pendulum go back and forth. It will happen every 12 to 15 years, and we will not as a result be bringing about a society that most of us, I think, in an hour could agree to, if we spent the time.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The first thing you really talked about was the process being part of the product. In terms then of setting our context, the important thing is the process and what we see as part of the process.

One of the things that has struck me over the years is that in a supposed democracy where everybody has equal rights, we have in fact become very hierarchical in the way we operate

as a society, incredibly. Status is given to various professions and that sort of thing, different power within our society, whether it is admitted to openly or not. The education system is rife with hierarchy and power relationships which are quite contradictory to the democratic values that we place on society.

I would suggest that colleges are one of the areas where in fact that principle has not been asserted in terms of the student involvement. I am wondering if you could talk a little bit about that notion. Where do the prime values, in terms of the process of a society, find themselves within the educational system, around the role of parents' accountability and the role of students, etc.?

Dr. Pascal: Just to use as an example, and I will be as brief as I can—the chair has already noticed that it is impossible for me to brief about something for which I feel so much passion. I know many of you feel the same way about politics. Forgive me, I am an educator and you have asked me to talk about education.

1450

I did make a visit recently to West Germany. Our minister did as well. We made separate visits. I think she was visiting West Germany on behalf of the Premier's Council. I have been to West Germany before, but never with the focus of looking at apprenticeship and the manner in which the streaming in West Germany takes place where fourth and fifth graders are streamed into vocational streams and so on and so forth. The context in which that takes place there, however, has a society at large where blue is beautiful.

Mr. Keyes, when I use that expression, I am referring to blue-collar, not necessarily a political symbol. Blue may be as beautiful as well, but I am a civil servant—

Mr. Jackson: We deeply appreciate the confusion.

Dr. Pascal: That is right. Even when I am wrong, I can be right. But there is a very different kind of value placed on the different roles that people play on the technology team. There is really a gut-level feeling, a visceral feeling about the fact that it takes technicians and technologists, along with the engineers and the right measure and the right balance, to bring a society to a level of productivity that West Germany is aspiring to.

It is in that sense, Mr. Johnston, that colleges, as instruments of social and economic policy—they are crown corporations; they are unlike

universities in terms of independent charters and the autonomy that is associated with universities—should be part of the solution in terms of us realizing some minor shifts to the way we think about the world of work in our society.

Certainly, in the world of freer buy or multilateral trade—I did not say free trade and I am not implicitly referring to any agreement, signed or unsigned—but as we look at Canada's role in an interdependent world economy—the middle of October is exhibit Z perhaps—we are going to have to ask questions about the balance in the world of work and how people place certain values on certain types of education and what takes place in elementary school and secondary school to bring this about.

In conclusion, when the guidance counsellor asked my daughter about three months ago, "Jennifer, what university will you be going to?" without any discussion about Jennifer's interests, nine years after the letter was delivered in the first instance, Jennifer did not have to say, "But why do you think I want to go to university?" "Well, because of your grades. Except for that B in geography"—and I do not know why; I hope there is not a geographer in our midst—"your grades are all A or A- grades, and of course you are going to university."

I am not blaming the guidance counsellor and I am not scapegoating guidance counsellors across the province. But there is a running-start values statement that is inherent in this rather naïve statement on the part of a counsellor to my not-so-naïve daughter, who began to ask why she could not go to Sheridan College because she was interested in performing arts, even though she had straight As in high school.

We have a lot to do. For my part, Mr. Johnston, I would err on the side of being a progressive educator where we look at the society at large and ask where this important process of education fits in terms of us realizing the future on our own terms. We have a tremendous headstart in Ontario. On the face of it, we have a tremendous number of institutions of differing sorts that can be brought to bear, with some leadership, to do an even better job of it.

I very much appreciate the opportunity to speak with the committee. I wish you well in your exciting and important endeavour. If you need me, I will be close at hand; I am a five-minute walk away. I would like to see you in September, representing my organization officially, if you will have us back.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Dr. Pascal. We very much enjoyed you today, but we are not

going to let you go quite yet because Mr. Jackson is just dying to ask you one last question. I cannot believe this. We finally have a presenter who is willing to go when his time is up.

Dr. Pascal: I am mindful of the fact that there are probably people sitting behind me around the corridors and I respect their time.

Mr. Jackson: I regret deeply, Charles, that we did not hear from you early in the process because that was the exact purpose of us asking the question of goals and philosophy, but unfortunately, we have been on several roads ourselves in the last two weeks.

I want to ask you specifically—first of all, let me as well commend you for the now only second reference to Ken Dryden's report, which I consider one of the hallmark pieces of work in this province. I too have raised it about nine times in the House and I have asked many of the media and other people to start comparing Radwanski to Dryden, as opposed to Hall. We fall into the trap of comparing today's analysis with something 20 years ago. If that is not proof positive that we are retrogressing, nothing is.

As you know, Dryden himself and the report were both dismissed, and I regret that deeply, but I thank you for commending it as well, because we are not getting enough of it through. He dealt with the issue of dropouts from the continuum of elementary, secondary and both post-secondary streams and he forced us to challenge some of our notions.

You may wish to elaborate briefly on that, and then I have a second question with respect to the Premier's Council.

Dr. Pascal: Just on Ken's report and one of the reasons it did not get the attention it deserved, as an educator in Peterborough, I tried to get a gathering of educational leaders, to get all our colleagues together and spend a couple of days with Ken talking about what it meant for us. At the college and university level, we took no joy in pointing the finger at the elementary and secondary panel in terms of their attrition, because we should be part of this "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts" sense of it.

One of the reasons perhaps that the report did not get any attention is that no one asked Ken to do it. No one asked. That was just Ken's parting shot as the outgoing youth commissioner. The minister did not ask him to do it. A select committee on education did not ask him to do it. He just did it. He poured out his heart and soul in terms of what I call a doorknob therapy; he had his hand on the door and he said, "I need to do this for me." He is an honest man, so it was good

for all of us who wanted to pay attention to it. That is why it did not get any attention, Mr. Jackson; no one asked him to do it.

Mr. Jackson: Yes, I am aware of that. I would perhaps ask, Madam Chairman, that we contact Mr. Dryden and ask that he come, because he talks a lot about organizational structures of schools and his comments might be very relevant to us in our second segment.

I am intrigued at how well you have conveyed the notion of vision for our students and system and how we, as politicians, are falling into the same trap of not weighting it properly.

I want to ask you a question about the Premier's Council. I do not want to oversimplify a rather large document, but its treatment of education can be summarized, in essence, as being that because offshore eastern economies have prospered and their educational systems have therefore fulfilled certain functions over the last 20 years, therefore that is the model we should be moving towards.

As an educator, you know that is not true in terms of what is actually happening to either the educational system or the Japanese economy. What I am really asking you is, do you consider the references in the Premier's Council report to be in fact visionary in that sense or to be more a freeze-frame, which is what I believe it attempts to do, based on a perception rather than, visionarily, where we should be trying to move our educational system?

Dr. Pascal: The first thing I would say is that, unless I have misread it, it is instalment number one. It is not meant to be the final product. It is not over. As I understand it, there are two individuals right now who are heading up phase two, which is on the education-training interface and all the challenges articulated in the first one. If the first report were all there is, I would be somewhat disappointed, but I am not disappointed, simply because it is the first instalment. It is just chapter one.

This is heresy for a not-so-civil servant to say, perhaps, but I was somewhat sad about what colleges have been and what colleges can do as part of the action in realizing a more competitive tomorrow for our province and our country. I think you could find that one page and cut and paste c-o-l-l-e-g-e-s and form the word "colleges," but I do not think those letters were brought together one by one anywhere in the report.

To be fair to the authors and to the Premier (Mr. Peterson), I would say that is more our fault in the college system. We have been very quiet.

We have been so busy doing so many things in so many different directions, we have tried to be all things to all people, that perhaps the system is a little out of focus because we have been focusing on too many things. We have been perhaps too busy to brag or to beg creatively or effectively. The college system *per se* has to be more mindful of the need to convey to others, as educators, what colleges can do and what we have not done as well as perhaps we should, including accepting criticism wherever it is well founded.

1500

I have no major criticism for round one. If it was round N, I would have quite a bit to say. But it is a good start. It has things in it that I think are obvious about the Pacific Rim. I wish someone would start paying more attention.

This is again a personal comment. I do not represent the council of regents today. I know you asked me, along with Walter Pitman and other colleagues I noticed on your agenda, to be here as us, not as the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education or the council of regents.

Mr. Jackson: Walter spoke for himself as well.

Dr. Pascal: Rather than making unidirectional presentations, Walter and I talked about having a meeting in his office where we would talk about how we were going to handle the select committee and then just turn on the tape. But both of us were too conservative for anything as radical as that.

Mr. Jackson: Blue is beautiful.

Dr. Pascal: Remember the context in which you said that, Mr. Jackson.

I wish people would articulate the challenges and opportunities of the People's Republic of China. The year 2000 is 11 years and about five and a half months away. It is really just a hop, skip and a jump. We ought to begin talking—perhaps Dr. Riel Miller, who is manager of policy research—about changing the Vision 2000 to 2010, because by the year 2015 I think people will be remembering fondly the Japanese experiment and how nicely it did. I think the Pacific Rim was well articulated in the Premier's Council. Perhaps there was not enough attention to the Pacific Rim countries, but that is because China is a hobby of mine, not because I am right.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Jackson, just before we go on, I might remind you that he may have said that blue is beautiful, but he also talked extensively about a liberal education. Perhaps in both cases, we will take that in a different light.

Mr. Jackson: And why we cannot deliver it.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: We will all take from that what we need, but I heard what he said.

Dr. Pascal: I do not know if I used the word "green" once.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: We are talking about collars. I like that.

Madam Chairman: The Canadian Federation of Independent Business will be our next delegation, if you would please come forward. Welcome to our committee today. Mrs. Andrew, would you like to officially identify yourself for the purposes of electronic Hansard?

CANADIAN FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS

Mrs. Andrew: I am Judith Andrew from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. I am the director of provincial affairs, Ontario. To my right is Jim Bennett. He is our vice-president of legislative affairs.

Madam Chairman: Begin whenever you like. We would ask that you reserve enough time at the end for members to ask questions. As you can tell, we do have a very curious bunch here.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Inquisitive, rather than curious.

Interjection: Some might think it is curious.

Madam Chairman: Whether it be bizarre, inquisitive or whatever, we certainly would like to have an opportunity to ask you some questions.

Mrs. Andrew: All the better for their curiosity. If I may, I would like to read our short statement into the record.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today on one of the most fundamental issues facing any society: What is the role of its education system? It will come as no surprise to you that our member companies in Ontario are concerned about our school system.

As employers, small business people are obviously worried about the capabilities of young people leaving our schools to become employees. The numbers in this regard make a compelling case. As of the end of June, over one half of our member firms said that a shortage of qualified help is a serious problem for their businesses.

These results were obtained through face-to-face interviews, a census of all firms renewing their membership during that specific quarter. There was no self-selection. They were given seven choices plus the opportunity to add

anything else they wished. A full 52 per cent said "shortage of qualified help."

In a separate survey last year, when asked what their problems were in obtaining suitable help, 30 per cent said lack of skills, 34 per cent said attitude, willingness to work; only nine per cent said wage levels and only 26 per cent said they had no difficulty.

These numbers are disturbing enough in their own right, especially when one considers that two out of three young people will have their first work experience in small businesses like those operated by our members. In fact, 82 per cent of our members hire employees educated to the secondary level.

However, our members are not just employers, as important as that role might be, they are also both parents and products of the school system; 90 per cent of them have secondary school education or more. They are also citizens concerned with the future of their communities, this province and our country. These broader perspectives underlie much of what we will be saying today.

Clearly, however, our members have given the high school system failing marks for the job it is doing in preparing young people for the workforce. Only 44 per cent were satisfied with how high schools had prepared workers for their firms. That, by the way, is the result from 1985. You will see in your kits that we are updating that result and we will have that available at the end of the summer.

There is, naturally, a practical side to our members' dissatisfaction with the education system. Over 70 per cent of them provide job training for young people, much of it remedial work for basic literacy and numeracy. This training is costly and time-consuming and often leads to preparing workers who are kidnapped by other businesses or by government. When they consider that they have already paid several times through property and business occupancy taxes for the education system, many business people resent having to correct the education system's inadequacies. From a bottom-line business point of view, they are disgusted when they hear that Canada has the highest per capita education expenditure of any Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development country but one of the worst illiteracy problems. They feel we are not getting our money's worth.

However, their larger concerns are with the future of our society. Our members have consistently expressed concerns about the lack of perseverance, self-discipline and enterprise

shown by young people. As a society undergoing profound transformation into the information economy, these values are crucial.

The debate about whether we educate students to reach their greatest potential or to enter the workforce is rapidly becoming irrelevant. We have to do both. If we wish to maintain our standard of living, let alone improve it, our students must be challenged to bring to the workplace the ability and the willingness to contribute to their full potential. They must be equipped to expand the boundaries of our current ways of doing things, to adapt and to integrate the appropriate technologies to make Canada internationally competitive while preserving our quality of life.

They must be prepared to do this as employees, as professionals and as entrepreneurs. How can they possibly do all of this when 17 per cent of high school students are functionally illiterate, when one third drop out before completing grade 12? Obviously they cannot.

In order to come to grips with the problems confronting our education system, we must reach consensus on what skills and knowledge are absolutely fundamental for our students. From there we can progress to a discussion of how we achieve those goals.

I think the following is a good summary of the essential skills and knowledge required by our society into the 1990s and beyond: literacy, an ability to communicate orally, numeracy, manual dexterity, an ability to co-operate with others, habits of hard work and learning to learn. Problem solving, adaptability and a quest for excellence must also be among the attributes of our high school graduates.

Mr. Bennett: I will take over for this second part. The key question you are going to move on to in the second stage—we are not sure we will be back, so we will mention a bit of it now—is how do we get to that kind of flexible, adaptable society that, I think many of you agree, we have to reach? We have come to the conclusion, like the Ontario Study of the Relevance of Education and the Issue of Dropouts, to which we contributed, that the curricula for our elementary and secondary schools must be totally revamped.

As long ago as 1984, our members called for standardized, province-wide testing. The fact that Radwanski called for such standards in his report was heartening. We urge you to support his recommendations in that regard.

1510

To cope and to excel in an economy and in a society that is increasingly complex and demand-

ing, our students must become accustomed to the concept of meeting standards. All of us, and they themselves as consumers, impose high standards. With vastly proliferating choices from a growing multitude of international sources, quality becomes an essential attribute.

As employers, parents, and most important as students, we have a right to know that the quality of education in our community is as high as in any other part of the province. Indeed, as a parent and as a former teacher, I have to question whether resistance to measurable outputs can be rooted in anything but self-interest. How can we realistically talk about a quest for excellence while allowing the system to cover up mediocrity and incompetence? If our current system is truly defensible, let alone desirable, why are some teachers from the public system placing their children in private schools?

Since one of the proposed essential skills listed earlier was the ability to co-operate with others, to contribute to our society, it is absolutely essential that Radwanski's recommendations about abolishing the credit system in our high schools be implemented as soon as possible. Not only do we need a more standardized set of subjects rather than ill-informed grazing from a smorgasbord of interesting but questionably useful options, we must look at the social implications of the credit system.

In a society where family and community ties are increasingly stretched and fragile, the credit system augments the potential for alienation among high school students. From recent personal experience with family members—a daughter, a niece and four nephews in high schools in Ontario—I have seen how the lack of mentoring, monitoring and peer group has led to boredom and underachieving for the majority; only one of the six has thrived, and that has more to do with his own drive than with the school system.

Even worse than the credit system is that most recent abomination called semestering. In a move that was apparently designed by accountants to save boards of education money on staff salaries, a semester system has been introduced that will further debilitate our high school students.

Taking the same four subjects for 75 minutes of class, five days a week, half a year at a time, may simplify the staffing and planning of the school administrators but it will have disastrous results for our students.

Going a full year with no exposure to a subject might be feasible for self-contained units such as civics or business which the student will only

take once, but to allow that long an interval between classes in essential subjects on which one must continue to build, such as English, mathematics or languages, is more than counter-productive, it is absolutely reprehensible.

Moreover, it is absolutely criminal to allow students to take physical education only once during their high school career. I say this as someone who was not much of an athlete during my school career. When you combine this one credit for physical education with the semester system, you have a situation guaranteed to create couch potatoes.

One of the oldest philosophies of education was that of the Greeks, "A sound mind in a sound body." This area of fitness and health must receive far more attention; indeed, it must be compulsory throughout high school if we are to establish healthy and health-conscious lifestyles. Our present permissive approach to the teaching of physical education and health is creating a time bomb that could well destroy our health care system in another generation.

Our members strongly support the concept of co-operative education, and we of course would be prepared to expand on this approach within the context of the work-in-society essential-subject area mentioned in the Ontario study if you so wish. However, we would like to sum up now to leave sufficient time for your questions.

Before I do, I would like to comment just briefly on one question that Mr. Jackson raised to the last witness. It is this whole question of the Japanese system. Again, if I might, I would like to speak from a couple of first-hand experiences.

One is that we currently have a Japanese student, a 17-year-old girl, staying with us—she has been with us for four months—through a rotary system exchange. Also, as part of an international small business network, we have worked very closely for a number of years with Japanese government officials.

In terms of a couple of very essential characteristics that I think the school system should be creating, which are innovation and independence, the Japanese system fails pretty drastically. They themselves will admit it. They are very good copiers, very good adapters, very good at taking a product, upping the quality and lowering the cost, but their own government, through the person of Ministry of International Trade and Industry officials, has indicated that it is very desperately concerned that their system does not create, does not promote innovation or entrepreneurship or any kind of creativity.

The long hours and the massive quest for marks, particularly in the high school system, have not created the type of dynamic society they want. They very much envy the Canadian, and to a certain extent the North American system, which they call splendid chaos, which is the closest translation they can get to a very dynamic society and economy that is constantly coming up with innovations, inventions and a very creative society.

Hopefully, Mr. Jackson, that would address that question in terms of whether we should be trying to copy or emulate the Japanese system. I think there are members who would very much say no.

However, in general, we support much of the philosophy and the recommendations of the Radwanski report. We feel that our education system cannot satisfy the current needs of our economy or our society. Without drastic change, there is no hope that our high schools can equip leavers, graduates or dropouts, to function adequately during their adult lives.

The requisite education must prepare young people for effective and satisfying participation in an increasingly knowledge-intensive economy and an increasingly complex society. The current education system does not meet that challenge, and it is up to all of us to make the necessary changes to ensure that it does.

I am very intrigued by your concept of using your householder mailings and those of your colleagues to really try to promote very, very general input across the province on this very important issue of what should be the underlying principles and philosophies of education. If I could pose one question to you before I finish, it would be: What have the results of that been? How many of your colleagues have picked up that challenge you yourselves have given to them, and what has been the feedback as a result of it?

It is up to all of us to make the necessary changes to make sure that our system does meet the challenges. Thank you.

Mrs. O'Neill: I am sorry I am first on the list this time, because I do find particularly your closing remarks a very wide brush. I find them very depressing.

I live with three young adults, who have many friends, and I have lived with them now for close to 26 years as they have grown through the school system of Ontario, and I do not think they are poorly equipped for life in any way. But I do find, and the more I have been sitting in this chair in the last two weeks I still feel, that the parent is

the prime educator. I do not feel the schools themselves can engender the kinds of qualities you have listed on page 3, which are habits of hard work, adaptability and a quest for excellence.

This is the most personal remark I have made during this presentation, but I began my work career as a teacher at the secondary level; 10 years after that my husband made, and had been trying to make for a long time, a decision to go into teaching, but he wanted to go at the post-secondary level. We discussed a lot about the difference between being an accountant and being a teacher, and I told him his most difficult challenge would be that he would have difficulty engendering a quest for excellence in his students, because he was a person who was very hard on himself and aimed for perfection in his own work habits. That is what he found, as I had found, and it is something you can only pass on.

There is no course in the quest for excellence or habits of hard work, and however much a teacher wants to develop those things and all the strategies you may use, you are always going to find—as I hope some of you will agree, because I have found with my own children—there are moments when they are not very adaptable and there are moments when they do not work very hard. I want, with my heart and soul, to have them do that.

1520

I feel very strongly that statements such as this, that there is no hope in our youth, really are very harsh judgements on a number of very good people who happen to be 30 years younger than I am. I have gone to many commencements where I have sat, very humbled. I hope I have taken what you have said somewhat more severely than you have said it, because I take great exception to the comments you have made on our young people in your brief.

Mr. Bennett: I do not want to imply that there is no hope for our youth. My despair is more over the system, over some of the administrators, some of the teachers I have dealt with, because I think our students, by and large, and many of the parents, have terrific potential and terrific possibilities.

Again, we talked in the previous session about some of the goals being spelled out. I think the goals spelled out are very desirable and I think the majority of the parents would very much accept those goals, but if you look at what is happening with structures like the credit system and the semestering system, the potential for lack

of quality, for not really drawing students out, is exacerbated by those systems.

I think the systemic problems and the limitations our system has for quite a number of students have to be dealt with. In terms of the role of the parents, I doubt you would find very much disagreement from anybody here today that this is an absolute fundamental and vital part of the whole process. But I know from first-hand experience the difficulty in working through the system if you start to demand or question the outputs.

I found out that one of my children, who just finished grade 5, basically was not being taught mathematics, was not being taught fractions and decimals and very essential things that all his future education was going to be built on. It is through the French immersion program, which we started when we lived in Ottawa; all my kids have gone through it. Trying to challenge teachers when you have a principal and certain administrators who do not speak any French, who cannot evaluate, I found an almost armed-camp mentality by the teachers: "How dare you ask questions? How dare you demand certain standards?" I was really quite shocked.

I think you will find that statement there is based very much on personal experience. In the case of a number of my relatives, we have met some wonderful teachers. We have also met some who were quite mediocre. I guess that is par for the course, but I think teachers do very much have a role in terms of setting models in quests for excellence. When it comes back to the family unit, there again the broader question Mr. Johnston has raised is how do you deal in a multicultural society and a society increasingly of single-parent families, how do you make sure that the education system does whatever it can to offset the imbalances found in the home environment?

Mrs. O'Neill: Do you have any hard data to back up your real aversion to the credit system? The people I have talked to about it, whom I know and associate with, are graduates of the credit system.

Mr. Bennett: No. As I said, it is based on personal experience. I am very concerned about it, particularly as it applies to basic programs such as language and to optional programs such as music. To go for a year or a year and a half between the chances of exposure to some of these courses is just ridiculous.

Mrs. O'Neill: You are now talking about the semestering system, which is another thing. I do know the difficulties with music in semestering,

but I also know that semestering helps people to get into industries more quickly. Some students actually partake in that course so they can go to work faster, particularly in January. There are people who have different goals at different times.

I want to bring one other thing to your attention. When you say that public school teachers send their children to the private schools, I do not see any difficulty with that. The child may need a private school setting and they should, as anyone else in the community, have the right to choose to go to private schools. They may not decide, for 50 different reasons, to send their children to the public school system in which they teach.

Mr. Bennett: I am not questioning their right to do so. I guess my concern is the same as that of people in Mr. Mahoney's or Mr. Jackson's riding when they used to drive by the Ford plant and see all the Japanese cars in the parking lot. They used to really wonder about the vote of confidence that the participants in the system were giving when they were basically voting with their feet. This is our concern, because it is not something where I see one or two isolated circumstances of special remedial qualities. In the neighbourhood I live in, which is Dr. Allen's riding, it is quite widespread. It does not give the public system a vote of confidence when you see the teachers in quite large numbers putting their kids into private schools.

Mrs. O'Neill: I will leave that with you then. I think that again has to be somewhat of an opinion.

Mrs. Andrew: There is some documentation of the growth of private schools.

Mrs. O'Neill: I realize that, but I just feel that sometimes people can afford to do something different. That may even have an effect with the cars. Sometimes people cannot afford to buy the house they are building and that is not always a good comment on our society.

I am sorry, in a way, that I got so personal, but your presentation really did engender an awful lot of emotion within me.

Mrs. Andrew: I would like to add, on the question of documentation, that we know that only about 44 per cent of over 3,000 members surveyed were satisfied.

Mrs. O'Neill: I do not question that.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: If 44 per cent were satisfied with the government, that would be pretty good.

Mr. Bennett: We do not have a three-party system in the education system, and I do not

know if it has become quite as equal as our political system.

Madam Chairman: We have a little less than 15 minutes left, and we have Mr. Jackson, Mr. Johnston and Mr. Mahoney.

Mr. Jackson: Let me thank you for your brief, because it was brief. I do not agree with all the things you said, but I agree with several points you have raised. I did not read it the way Mrs. O'Neill read it. What I saw was your bringing to our attention those children and students who fall through the cracks. I guess you are trying to indicate to us that many of those surface because the alternatives, if they are not in school, are to be on some form of social service or in an independent lifestyle or working.

I do not wish to dispute the comments with respect to the problem, because I share a concern with you in terms of dropouts. I also indicate to you that although we wish to build a system that builds on strengths, we cannot refuse to look at those who fall between the cracks.

Yesterday, I made reference to the early school leave program. I can only reiterate the concern that I sense I am sharing with you when, as a 26-year-old trustee of one year, I dumped 96 children below the age of 16 on to the market under a program fully approved by this government, and my statistics on my board were low. I could not live with that, having a teacher say, "I can't deal with a student who never attends," the principal say, "I do not want him back in my school," a superintendent say, "That is all we can do," and a social worker say, "I have no legal authority in another 18 months."

We develop programs with the private sector, so I want to commend you for being here because I think you are part of the solution. I do not think you are hitting the mark on some of your points, and when you return in the fall, I will talk to you directly about that.

I do feel that you are one of the few groups that, for whatever reason, is articulating a concern for the kids falling through the cracks, because nobody has been here to talk about them. There is no organized group of dropout parents. There is no support group for dropouts in this province. There is no support group for illiterates below the age of 20. There is an advocacy group for illiterates, do not get me wrong, but not in the context of why we are not getting it done in our school system. I see you as fulfilling that function, and I want to put that into context and on the record.

1530

Having now got personal about how I interpreted the brief, I would like to thank you for your comments about the balance, the perspective you put on the Japanese system, because I think everybody presumes you want us to be identical. It was very important for you get the perspective on the record. I think it is a public perception that business people want us to be more like the Japanese. I was very pleased to hear what you said.

Do you have a specific education subcommittee within your organization now to do the analysis, or are you doing it entirely through your political wing? I have a reason for asking that question. Are you handling all matters pertinent to this through your legislative affairs branch, or do you have a committee that is looking specifically at educational needs for small businessmen and women in this province?

Mrs. Andrew: I should preface by saying we do not have any committees, and the reason is that our membership is so very small.

Mr. Jackson: Yes.

Mrs. Andrew: You probably know that 85 per cent of the businesses in this province have fewer than 10 employees and they just cannot spare the time to be away from their companies to attend committee meetings. All of our statements, really on every topic, are drawn from our surveys and contact with our members, usually by phone or letter, and also our personal calls which we make once a year to every member.

Mr. Jackson: I am nervous about always just gaining information about measuring how bad or how well the status of a given situation is as it relates to education. We have surveys from the Toronto media, which have done several, and which you have quoted in your report as a matter of fact. I guess I am looking to small business, the chamber of commerce and other groups to give us more specific feedback. I think it would be hazardous for you just to embrace elements of Radwanski in a patchwork, but rather you should do what some of the industrial councils are doing in this province, which is to link with the school systems in terms of looking at common goals.

I would like to see some groups make it their goal or mission in their boards to reduce the dropout rate with linkages, time in and time out of school, return time and things of that nature. I realize your organization lacks the resources to do that, but how can we get you and independent and small business people in this province working in that mode?

Mr. Bennett: There are a couple of things we are doing that I think all of us collectively can do.

We are on the board of Junior Achievement, and over the last six months, an extra 2,100 of our members have signed up to work with Junior Achievement. I think that might well be a group you would want to talk to.

Also, there are some really important and interesting things happening in Scarborough. The Scarborough Board of Education is hosting an international conference on industry and education this September. The people there have a very good co-op program. We have worked with them and North York and a number of others over the years. That whole exchange-interchange is a valuable approach in terms of teaching life skills and work skills. I think it is something that we as an organization encourage. That is why our president is on the board of Junior Achievement.

Mrs. Andrew: Also, in the past, we have produced booklets, pamphlets and educational materials, mostly dealing with the role of entrepreneurship in our society. They are for use at the school level and we are hoping that guidance teachers will find them helpful in bringing forward the very credible career option of being either a small business entrepreneur or an employee in small business. We were concerned in the past that this was not something that was raised as even something an individual could consider. That was a void we tried to fill through disseminating these materials to the schools and the guidance teachers.

Mr. Bennett: To support what was said earlier in terms of this whole hierarchical value system with professionals perhaps being overvalued relative to blue-collar workers, another point is that we think the technical trades are very important. We have had Dr. Lois Stephenson from Acadia University design a module for vocational and technical schools in terms of exposing, in a day and a half, technical and vocational students to the concept: "You do not have to work for somebody your whole life. You can start your own business. It is not particularly mysterious. Here are some of the things you need to know. Here is where you can find information."

We agree that the business community does have a role to play, both at the secondary and post-secondary levels. Various forums are now starting to develop, but there is still a long way to go.

Mr. Mahoney: I would like to make a couple of comments. You can take them by way of questions and respond to them.

First of all, I find in my experience with Junior Achievement that the kids involved in JA are not

the problem. They are part of the solution or they would not be involved in Junior Achievement, most of the time.

I also do not quite understand your analogy to the education system, the Ford Motor Co. and Japanese cars. I think that problem is more a function of our industrial difficulties and our keeping up in that sector than it is of our high school graduates or even our university graduates.

Frankly, I consider myself a fairly strict parent, but if I were a 16- or 17-year-old reading page 3 of your brief and saying, "This is what I am supposed to be when I graduate from school," I think I would be pretty frightened by it. From a statement like, "Students must be challenged to bring to the workplace the ability and the willingness to contribute to their full potential," does a 17-year-old really understand that, the willingness to contribute to his or her own potential?

If they are going to drop out of school at that point, either graduating or not graduating, is it not the responsibility then of the workplace to take what skills are there and work with that individual to further that individual's education? Are you expecting too much to create a 17-year-old bionic student who is going to have all this tremendous desire? I have to tell you that I sure did not have it when I was 17 years old. I have a 17-year-old at home and the only quest he has is for the fridge. I just think statements like "quest for excellence" at 17 years old are really a little mind-boggling to me.

Mrs. Andrew: We are not suggesting that these things be said to the young people. These are suggestions for the educators. We are trying to impart the idea that our members are expecting a student trained in a general way in the basics and also one who has an attitude of problem-solving, an ability to work with others and those kinds of values or attributes which that individual brings to the workplace, where he then learns the specific skills he needs for that particular workplace.

What our members are complaining about is that they have to do remedial work in terms of basic education before they can build upon that to train for the workplace or the job at hand.

Mr. Mahoney: Has it not always been thus, though? A 17-year-old comes out of a high school education environment at grade 12. Most people graduate—assuming they have not been held back, and nobody gets held back any more—from grade 12 at 17. If they decide not to go on to a post-secondary education at that point,

do we really expect them to walk into the workplace with this great ideal, almost a bionic attitude, that you have put forward?

Mrs. Andrew: I think they should be encouraged to be interested in the workplace. It is distressing to us that 17 per cent of high school graduates are functionally illiterate. Our members are trying to make up for that problem when they hire them. We are not demanding the impossible of the school system, but we are asking for a basic education that will equip the person to learn once he arrives in the workplace. I do not think that is unreasonable.

1540

Mr. Mahoney: I take that statement as a much modified way of saying what you said on page 3, because I, like Mrs. O'Neill, reacted with some concern that the statements on page 3, if anything, seemed more to be modelled after the Japanese philosophy.

Mr. Bennett: Mr. Mahoney, in terms of the goals in terms of quest for excellence, we were trying to basically realize that to keep the quality of life we have and to meet very real and legitimate concerns about the environment, equality of opportunity for women and our minority and ethnic groups and still compete with the Pacific Rim countries, we have a major challenge.

We are not saying that we want to turn out bionic workers or robots or clones of the Korean or Taiwanese systems. What we are saying is that our students and our education system have to realize that this is the challenge they have, to be able to keep up in terms of quality, and to go back to the Ford example, to get the quality into the Canadian product so that our own consumers are willing to accept it and still keep these other values, these other very essential ingredients that our society very rightly values.

Mr. Mahoney: I might just close my comments on one remark. I totally agree with your premise on physical education and health, even more from the point of view that it might be something that, if it were stressed a little more in the schools, might keep a few more kids in school. The school should have some fun elements to it as well as the hard work.

Mrs. Andrew: I would also like to raise at this point the reason we enclose in the kits a report entitled *The Impact of Service Sector Growth on Employment and Earnings*. I think that is the economic context in which we want to see the educational goals established. If you will turn to that report, you will see that a good part of the

report, and there are also some inserted pages, deals with employment by industry for Ontario, showing massive growth in the service sector in Ontario.

On page 24, there is a table entitled "Job Opportunities by Education Level," which makes the basic point that for the future, job opportunities will depend more and more on levels of education, levels of schooling. The students who are dropping out or are not literate are going to find themselves increasingly in a difficult situation when it comes to securing a future for themselves. Our concern is for that. Our concern is for the needs of our members, but also for the students who will drop through the cracks in terms of their achievement and their future prospects.

Mr. Bennett: There is an underlying assumption in much of the debate about the transformation of the economy that the majority of service jobs are always going to be burger-bashing or taking in each other's laundry, but 60 per cent of all the high-skilled jobs in our economy are going to continue to come from the service sector, so it is something we are very concerned about.

Madam Chairman: I would like to thank the federation for its contribution to our committee today. We look forward to seeing you in September.

The Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario is our next delegation. Please come forward. Welcome to our committee. The members have already received a copy of your brief as well as the supplementary brief. If you could identify yourselves for the purposes of electronic Hansard and begin whenever you are ready.

FEDERATION OF WOMEN TEACHERS' ASSOCIATIONS OF ONTARIO

Mrs. Hunter: Yes, we will, and thank you for the opportunity of appearing. To my right is Victoria Corbett, an executive assistant with the Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario, and to my left, Marilyn Dickson, executive assistant with FWTAO. I am Patricia Hunter. I am the treasurer of FWTAO and a classroom teacher in the public schools of Ontario for 31 years.

Madam Chairman: I noticed that your brief is very extensive and I do not know if you planned to précis it somewhat during the presentation time, but we would very much appreciate it if you could leave time at the end for questions.

Mrs. Hunter: Yes, we will. You will notice that in the brief there is a summary at the end and we will highlight parts of the brief and certainly leave time for questions.

Madam Chairman: Thank you.

Mrs. Hunter: The Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario is the professional organization which represents 32,000 women teaching in the public elementary schools in Ontario.

We are grateful for this opportunity to contribute to the deliberations of the select committee on education concerning educational philosophy and the fundamental goals of the Ontario school system.

We do not question the existence of a public education system, but seek to establish through public debate and discussion, the purpose and role of schools in today's society. To what end does Ontario mandate 10 years of compulsory schooling for its young people? What results does the public expect from its investment in the schools? I think by what has gone on before, you have seen that for most of us it is a very personal investment in Ontario schools.

This year, we celebrate our 70th anniversary. In the past, we have submitted numerous briefs to the provincial government and other bodies on a variety of topics that affect the education and welfare of young children. We take pride in our history as an advocate for women's equality both in education and in society as a whole and have lobbied actively for legislation that will help to meet our goal of a truly equitable society for all component groups.

We are pleased to note specific reference to a multicultural and multiracial society in the terms of reference of the select committee, as well as the committee's own identification of equal life chances and full development of each student as major considerations to its review.

Over 66 per cent of FWTAO members are classroom teachers. They have daily, firsthand experience with children from kindergarten age to grade 8 and, whenever possible, with their families. We believe, therefore, that our submission to the committee represents not only the viewpoint of elementary teachers but also, and not from any economic imperative, the best interests of the young children of this province.

The FWTAO approached this discussion with two assumptions: first, that the needs of society determine the needs of students and ultimately the goals of the school system, and second, that the school system must determine the methods used to attain these goals. We believe that the

public has the right to decide through dialogue and consensus what its children need to know. We remain convinced, however, that it is the responsibility of professional educators to determine how this learning should take place. Currently, the range of opinions concerning what schools should do is matched closely by the number of views on how they should be doing it.

We recognize the need for a clear statement of direction for our school system. The submission considers the current goals of the school system as stated by the Ministry of Education and examines the environment in which this review takes place. It relates the realities of our schools to the goals of today's society and attempts to anticipate the needs of the world that students entering the school system today will encounter when they leave. Throughout, we ask questions. We do not believe that decisions of this magnitude can be made without broad consultation and input from all stakeholders. If our schools are to move forward into the 21st century with the support they need, there must be a sense of ownership and commonality of purpose.

The FWTAO hopes that the select committee will invite further input before reaching final decisions.

The truism is that the more things change, the more they stay the same. The past two decades have seen the educational theme move from the philosophies of Living and Learning in 1968 to the recent proposals of George Radwanski, an Ontario Study of the Relevance of Education and the Issue of Dropouts.

The popular notion is that this heralds a shift from soft schools to hard schools in keeping with the tenor of the times. The free-wheeling, cafeteria-style approach to the curriculum perceived in the Hall-Dennis report has supposedly given way to a tighter, more content-oriented view of what schools should be doing.

1550

Yet, underneath it all, have the fundamental aims of education really changed?

Traditionally, the role of education has been to provide the society's young with skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed for successful adult life. The public school system is society's means of preparing its young to assume their future responsibilities as citizens in a democracy.

Compulsory public education in Ontario was founded primarily as a means to advance the social and economic status of the province or, in other words, for the public good.

The concept of equality of educational opportunities as the basis for equal opportunity in life

has evolved over time and according to current needs and philosophies in society, notably in recent years reflecting an increased emphasis on individual worth. Today, it is generally accepted that public education serve two separate but related purposes—the development of the individual as well as the good of society. Concurrently, there has been considerable progress in our understanding of the different needs and learning styles of individual children and the recognition that equality of opportunity in education and equal treatment are not necessarily synonymous.

Ms. Dickson: The Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario does not believe that there is a widespread disagreement with the philosophy expressed in the current goals, either for elementary education or for the school system as a whole.

It would be difficult to find fault with lofty principles that on the face of things should produce the ideal citizen. The problem appears to be that they are, in the words of the *Toronto Star* in a recent series on the Ontario school system, "fine words—but still not enough to guarantee everything the public seems to want."

In 1965, the federation of women teachers submitted a number of recommendations to the committee on aims and objectives of education in the schools of Ontario. The federation based its proposals on one particular justification, namely change.

The "almost cataclysmic change" of recent years had produced the need "to adapt the educational experiences provided for the children of Ontario not only to a rapidly changing way of life but to the concept of change itself." That is what we said in 1965.

For this reason, we said "it is not appropriate to look at the past, nor to the solutions proposed to meet the needs of other days. Rather, we must look at society as it exists today with its corporate and individual needs and direct our educational programs to the fulfilment of those needs."

The women teachers' federation believes that rationale is still valid almost a quarter of century later. Change has become a constant in our society. The rate of change, however, has not. However cataclysmic it may have seemed in 1965, there was barely an inkling of what was yet to come. Similarly, looking beyond 1988, we are now well aware that we must expect further change and at an even greater rate.

Traditionally, the school system has responded to identified needs. As new needs emerged, the schools adjusted to incorporate the resulting demands. This approach is no longer appropri-

ate. Today, the rate of change requires that we try to anticipate the future. To establish a philosophy and goals that will stand the test of time, it is necessary to examine trends in society and their implications for our schools. The philosophy and goals must fit the needs as we understand them today, yet be sufficiently flexible to withstand the test of continuing, accelerating change tomorrow.

What then does the public want from its schools? The environment in which education takes place has changed and, with it, society's demands and expectations. How much is realistic? What are today's realities that would indicate the need for new goals or different directions for the school system? In the light of these realities, what should be the role of the schools?

Already, a large body of literature exists to testify to current social, technological and economic developments, and to speculate, however guardedly, how the emerging trends may affect us as a society.

Since the publication of *Living and Learning*, almost every aspect of Ontario society has changed. This submission reviews these conditions only briefly, identifying those areas where recent and future change might be expected to influence society's demands on and expectations of its school system.

Ontario is now home to an increasingly diverse ethnocultural and racial population. In addition to more flexible immigration provisions, multiculturalism policies at both federal and provincial levels recognize and welcome the contributions of immigrants from numerous backgrounds and countries of origin. In recent years, significant numbers of refugees have begun to make their way to Canada, many of them settling in Ontario and many of them with crucial needs.

The comparative prosperity in Ontario in relation to much of the rest of the country has also encouraged migration to this province from elsewhere in Canada. In each instance, the tendency has been to settle in the larger urban areas where the necessary social services may already be stretched.

Although Ontario's economy is currently described in such terms as "boom" and "buoyant," this is by no means the case throughout Canada or, indeed, throughout this province. A large percentage of Ontario families live at or near the poverty line. Wage earners may hold more than one job at a time in order to support a family, further increasing the stress on the family structure.

Meanwhile, the move to the big cities places major strains on the housing supply. Many families and individuals live in crowded and unsatisfactory conditions. For many employed people, not just the unemployed or the working poor, the prospect of finding suitable, affordable housing is dismal.

None of these trends has emerged in isolation, yet each has served to compound or highlight the rest. Their combined effect has been to inflict major strain on society and its traditional support systems. According to most reports and indications, we should expect these stresses to continue as we approach the year 2000.

It is our view that problems exist in our schools because they exist in society, but whatever their origin, they affect children's ability to learn and the environment in which learning takes place. Children who are hungry or frightened do not learn. Young people whose self-esteem has not been nurtured have little motivation to learn. The relationship between poverty and achievement levels is complex and relentless.

While the problems of society have become more pronounced, significant developments within the school system in the past 20 years have nevertheless enabled schools to become more responsive to the needs of students and their families. The definition of equal opportunity has been expanded considerably, and our sensitivity towards various forms of discrimination has also increased. Research into cognitive development has brought new understanding of the ways children learn and the acceptance of new teaching methods to suit individual learning styles.

The growth of community-based schools, many of them open from early in the morning until late in the evening, has further encouraged involvement of parents in their children's education. The provision of junior kindergarten programs in many schools has provided the youngest students with an early entrance into the formal education system and access to quality programs. Alternative schools provide other options for students who might benefit from learning opportunities outside the regular classroom.

In an environment that seeks to address the needs of the whole child, young children are much as they ever were, but are also more tolerant of the differences of others, more respectful of their abilities and more accepting of their disabilities.

In spite of some specific public concerns about the content and outcomes of education, there are

real signs of confidence in the schools and in their role in shaping the future society. Surveys conducted by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education suggested that the public does not commonly confuse those concerns with "the larger economic and social problems created outside the schools. Most of the public merely looks to the schools to aid in solving such problems." As well, the OISE surveys indicated that, "Since 1982, the Ontario public has become more willing to support increased funding for all levels of schooling."

Mrs. Hunter: The task before the select committee is to determine an overall purpose for Ontario's school system, one in which all stakeholders—students, parents, educators, employers and the community at large—can feel a sense of ownership. Specifically, the committee must determine the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will give today's young people their best chance of success and satisfaction in an unknown future.

1600

FWTAO believes that the first question we must ask is, what are we educating children for? Should schools try to prepare students for this workforce or further education? Is responsible citizenship a sufficient purpose? Should it be all of these perhaps, or any of a variety of creative endeavours that may be open to them or required of them as future citizens?

We know that tomorrow's world will be knowledge-intensive and that technology will be a major force in shaping the future society. The amount of information available grows daily, as do ways of storing and retrieving it. Already the school curriculum is content-oriented, yet calls continue for additional specific content. How much of the mounting body of knowledge do students need to absorb? How important will facts be? Is it better to teach all the facts or to stress the basic skills that enable students to locate, select, organize and use the information they need?

Professor Northrop Frye observed, in a Toronto Star series: "What schools should be concerned with is not bodies of knowledge. The basics are not bodies of knowledge. They are skills."

Learning is a continuum. If schools continue to help students develop a solid grounding in numeric skills and the full range of communication skills, young people will have a foundation that encourages and enables them to go on learning throughout their lives. Their ability to listen carefully, think critically and articulate

clearly will be of vital importance in a world of competing values and priorities.

There appears to be general agreement that the new basics for tomorrow's citizens must include the flexibility to accept change in the concept and nature of work and in society as a whole. We can expect that people will live longer, that there will be fewer jobs and shorter work weeks and that most people will need to find creative ways to use additional leisure hours, as well as to maintain their own sense of self-worth and identity.

Perhaps most important of all, in a continually changing environment with a mix of cultures and values, people will need to be able to live comfortably with themselves and with one another. Schools can provide young people with opportunities to live and work alongside others from different backgrounds. Their skills for living will include the ability to share and co-operate, to work out problems together, to feel confidence in themselves and respect for the contributions of others, whatever their background.

FWTAO does not make recommendations for specific goals. We believe there is no single or simple answer. Rather, we use principles of importance to our members that we feel should be taken into account in the select committee's deliberations and built into the principles of any new philosophy.

We have highlighted some bullets and I will just go over those very quickly with you; the statement of the ministry's full commitment to the public education system; organized implementation procedures for the introduction of new policies or practices, to include provision of necessary resources and in-service programs for teachers; and development of an appropriate curriculum for student teachers, who will need more intensive training to meet the needs of children in the future, particularly an understanding of child development and activity-based learning.

The early years in school are especially significant in providing students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes they will need as a base for future learning. Child-centred, activity-based learning methods delivered through an integrated curriculum are the best means to deliver a crowded curriculum. The role of the family is vital in the development and education of children. Positive communication between teacher and home is needed for the child to benefit fully from the school experience.

To encourage greater involvement of parents from minority groups, alternative models for

parent participation are necessary. Language training is essential for immigrant women, especially mothers with children in the school system, to forestall alienation as the child becomes more fluent in the new language.

Clear articulation of the public schools for education will facilitate accountability of the school system and the development of appropriate strategies to improve outcomes for students. An elementary school's outcome goals set by division would allow for differentials in the development of individual students. Useful evaluation tools would include learning profiles developed by teachers for use in their observation of young children and instruments from the Ontario assessment instrument pool to provide a more flexible assessment capability than conventional, standardized tests can provide.

Our comment was that standardized tests produce standardized children, and there is quite a reference to it in our brief on page 25, talking about the pressure of the standardized tests at the grade 13 level many years ago. When you have standardized tests, unfortunately, you teach to standardized tests.

I would draw your attention to some things I have particularly highlighted, and some of them would be: Equity must be central to all aims and objectives established for the school system and may require extraordinary action; revision of curriculum, learning materials, learning approaches and teaching methods to take into account and value the experiences of all students; antiracial and sex equity initiatives should be undertaken in tandem, since so many of the contributing forces are indistinguishable; language acquisition programs to assist immigrants, and encouragement by school boards of an ethnocultural, racial and nonsexist mix in visible positions of responsibility as role models for students.

In conclusion, our complete presentation notes that a return to practices of earlier years may not produce the desired results. Society has changed and so have schools. Research has helped us towards greater understanding of the complicated social, emotional and cognitive interrelationships that influence the learning process. It would be tragic at this crucial period in history to undertake regressive action in the guise of progress.

Thank you. We welcome questions from the committee.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much for your presentation. I am glad to say you did leave lots of time for questions.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I would like to start off by saying how happy I am that the FWTAO came and that in fact you were the first of the federations to indicate you would come. We know this is not an easy time for federations to muster their forces to put together briefs, but I feel especially glad you have come because of the quality of the brief, which I think is really first rate, quite frankly, and one of the best we have seen. I will start off by saying that.

I also have difficulty knowing how to arrange my questions, because you touch so many of the areas that are of interest to me. I am especially pleased with some of the comments in the presentation about equity and around elimination of racism and sexism and other matters.

I could get into debate or a discussion with you around whether or not the goals in education are in fact agreed upon when you then add all those things which are left out of the goals and whether or not we have actually listed the correct goals for education, but I will leave that. I raise that with everybody, and I am sure the committee is totally bored with me doing that at this stage.

I want to raise a couple of things. One was that, although you do not spend as much time as you might have, in a self-serving way, talking about the importance of the primary level and the lack of resources that have been put into the elementary panel in comparison with the secondary panel, you do make the point in your brief. I would like you to talk a little bit about how important that is, and maybe to do it in the context of one of the things Radwanski talked about, although I know your opinions of Radwanski are as mixed as many of ours, the notion he started talking about of kids getting involved in the school system at three.

I guess one of the things I did not notice in your presentation, and maybe I just missed it in my quick reading of it, was early childhood education and a connection and linkage to the elementary panel and your membership's work, obviously, in terms of where you see that moving in the early years of education as we move into the future. What is going to be the new, changing role for that, in your view?

Ms. Dickson: I would like to say at the outset that we are very much looking forward to further involvement in discussions with you in the fall. This presentation was fairly general. We wanted to make some main points but then to get into many more of the specifics in the fall. Certainly at that time we will be expanding particularly on early childhood education.

You comment about the difference in resources between elementary and secondary education. I am glad you have referred to it and have noted that we have referred briefly to it. On many occasions we have taken this up with the ministry—at every opportunity—but I would like to make the comment that a budget really reflects priorities. When elementary teachers continue to see that more funds are allocated to the secondary schools, even though the elementary schools have more students and many other demands placed on them, we do get a message, and we do not very much appreciate that message.

1610

We would like to make the point that just because the children are smaller, some people think you can fit more into the classroom and you do not need as many teachers to teach more small children. Also, people tend to view them as not causing as many problems as some older children, all of which may be true. However, it really is important that appropriate funds are allocated to those early years, the formative years, when you can really make a difference in shaping the children's attitudes, their learning skills.

We really would like to see significantly more funds allocated to the early years. We are glad to see that the ministry has done that now for grades 1 and 2. However, we would like to see more funds.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I wonder if you could talk a little bit as well in the context of theories of child development, which you also allude to, and the greater need for concentration on that in teacher training in the future. We have talked a lot around here with various people who have come forward about the importance of process in terms of outcomes as well.

It is at the elementary level where we get more co-operative learning that we really can say there are child-centred, activity-based and integrated curricula happening. It just strikes me that the enhancement of that kind of philosophy, with money for it and that kind of thing, at the elementary panel may do an awful lot to excite the enthusiasm of students and maybe even teachers at the secondary level in terms of looking at more innovative ways to keep the interest of adolescents.

Mrs. Hunter: I think that probably is a fact. We have been particularly innovative in the elementary grades in dealing with the individual child, the child as a whole, in dealing with the home, with apprising them of what we are doing. As you have heard from other groups, I know, we

want to make lifelong learners out of these people.

You have talked about the value of work, and perhaps work is a misnomer, because work can be fun. I think the children do enjoy coming to school; they do enjoy learning. The methodology and the strategies are quite different. As I have watched on television various groups talk to you, I do not think they are aware of the kinds of things that we are now doing in the elementary schools. Perhaps that is our problem, in that we are not publicizing it as much as we should. Although we do celebrate the excellence, we do invite groups in, I am not sure they are aware of all the kinds of things that are taking place, unfortunately.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I do not think they are either, and the upper levels of our education system—and I include the universities and colleges in this—are very much caught in some fairly old-fashioned notions of teaching, which the elementary panel has been gradually pulling itself out of over the last number of years. They could learn a lot from some of the co-operative models that are developed and that kind of thing.

I just want to comment on one or two things, and I do not need a response. I know Mr. Keyes has raised the matter before, and I really liked your emphasis on it, about the importance of the community school, whether it is for parental involvement and accountability or just in terms of a holistic approach to education and that kind of thing. I thought that was great.

One area I still have difficulty with, which is for further debate at some time later on, comes around the notion of antiracist curricula and the limitations you as a federation put on heritage language, frankly. I look at heritage language as giving value to children for where they are coming from and helping them in their notions of self-worth and as a really important model.

If we look at it differently than we have thought about heritage language, as a means of trying to get past some of the stereotypes that we have about various kinds of groups in our society—and at some other point I would like to talk further with you as we get on to these kinds of curricula notions about how in fact that does not have to be a separation notion at all—you state a concern about the possibility of the extension of heritage language, but it could be one of the real means of dealing with some of the inherent systemic racism and sexism that continues in our system.

I just want to leave that as a comment. I do not think the models that we develop on it have to be

exclusionary. They can be very inclusive if we look at them in a different fashion within an antiracist curriculum kind of notion.

Ms. Dickson: Certainly, it is an area that we have been very much concerned with recently. We will make a note of it and we will develop something more extensive.

Mrs. Hunter: I will only comment, if I may, on a personal basis. For heritage language programs, you do remove children from a class and take them somewhere separate. To my mind, that does not give other children the opportunity to study their language or their culture or that sort of thing. I think perhaps it might be done in a better way.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Exactly. I am just saying that before we get ourselves so hung up on that kind of development or sort of evolution of the model that has been out there, which has been very much a separation thing, we should maybe look at what the purposes and goals of it might be in these larger antiracist terms. If we do that, we may very well come up with a very different model that includes all the kids in the class in the development of that model.

Mr. Mahoney: I too want to thank you for the brief. I think it is terrific. It is very positive, in contrast perhaps to one or two others that we have seen today.

I particularly like the statement on page 11, which I am delighted to read, that “young children are much as ever they were, but are also more tolerant of the differences of others, more respectful of their abilities and more accepting of their disabilities.” I could not agree more. I think you see young kids today in elementary school—I have seen it with mine and with their friends. In the schools that I have been around, there are really some wonderful young people out there today. Many of the attitudes have changed and society’s attitude changes have something to do with that, but I think your group has a lot to do with it too. I think society owes you something for that.

In regard to your comment that education should be general, though, I am almost wondering if I am coming to the conclusion that the problem is a function of age more than a function of any particular system. The kids are great up to grade 8, and if they can get through grade 12 or grade 13 and go on to university, they all of a sudden take on a whole new relevance and a whole new meaning of life. It is that age range from 13 to 18 where they seem to struggle and have difficulties, in the education system,

perhaps in the home, perhaps in society with their friends, etc.

I just wonder about the kid who drops out. If we are to extrapolate your views, education should be very general in high school, in the secondary system, to give them a basis for further learning in life; however, if they drop out just before grade 12 or after grade 11, they do not have any of the specifics. Is there a way to balance that?

If in fact we have to expect a certain percentage of our kids to drop out no matter what we do, is there some way of balancing that to give them some better tools through the elementary and secondary systems so that if they do indeed decide to drop out, regrettably, they at least have something to fall back on?

Mrs. Hunter: Of course, the secondary field is not our field, so I will speak from a personal basis. I think you are quite correct. There are some students who will drop out, and I think we want to make the way clear for them to come back at some other time. I think they do come back as adults, and the school experience has to be good enough for them that they want to come back.

If they have the skill of being able to read for information, if they have numeracy skills, that perhaps is all, in my opinion, that we can do for them. By example, we may instil a work ethic—perhaps their parents have—or we may not. They may have to go out and realize the value of schooling.

I have heard many people say to you, particularly from the business sector, that the students were not trained, that they could not fill in forms, that they could not do whatever. We can teach children to do that. If that is what society wants of us, we will teach them. Hopefully, they will learn; we will teach them. But do we want our education system to do that?

1620

Today someone made a comment about industry having its own sorts of training facilities. We have this sort of thing that goes on all the time. As a teacher, it is very easy to blame the person before you for the skills that a student does not have, and perhaps we need more interchange of ideas. The colleges blame the high schools because the students do not know how to write essays or do critical reviews. Perhaps we need to get together and someone to say, "This is what we want students to have."

I personally believe that perhaps we could do some early identification of potential dropout students.

Mr. Mahoney: That is an interesting point. Maybe people in the business community should be looking at their expectations of what they are looking for in those young people, rather than blindly setting goals that they were taught because they were taught them.

Mrs. Hunter: People look back and unfortunately—I think this has come through too—we cannot be all things to all people. We do not have enough time to do that for society.

Mr. Jackson: I want to put on the record that the brief we have in front of us is 25 pages long and your presentation does not do as much justice to the report as it deserves. I have been leafing through it madly and I also wish to thank you for its rather complete presentation. I will try to quickly focus on several areas which are of major concern to me.

We have received 41 briefs with yours. Yours is now only the third brief which has had specific reference—there was a fourth with a general reference—to promoting sex equity and the issue of curriculum and overcoming child abuse and other violence. You have treated that very well on page 23 of the report and, hopefully, I ask members if they will try to get that section read because it will not be the third presentation if it is not read completely. I wanted to draw that to the committee's attention.

On that point, let me ask you: The Metro Action Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children, Metrac, has been before us and has clearly made a recommendation which I personally support, that somehow we examine the goals to convey within their wording our commitment to the issue of gender equity. Could you be more specific, as educators, on that point for us?

Mrs. Hunter: I listened to part of their presentation one evening and, as always, was shocked—I think I am talking about the right one—by the statistics. We, as a federation, have done extensive studies on gender reference in textbooks and published something called *The More Things Change the More They Stay the Same*. I believe it looked at a 10-year differential in texts in Ontario and found that there had not been a great deal of change.

We have lobbied considerably on behalf of affirmative action and of correct role modelling and we believe that this applies not only as far as gender is concerned but also as far as race is concerned. Any society in which over 50 per cent of its members are portrayed in a less than advantageous role is a society that is in trouble. You are not utilizing the resources of that society.

The curriculum has to concern itself with this, and we do in a formal and an informal way. This is perhaps the advantage of an integrated curriculum. Teachers need more training in handling these matters because their socialization has been such that they are not necessarily equipped to handle it. We are doing this within our schools, particularly in the field of sexual abuse. I know the school system that I am involved with has been running pilot programs.

A tolerance for one another and one another's abilities, of course, has to be a common thread. I think you are absolutely correct. More has to be done. It is absolutely vital in our goals.

Mr. Jackson: Earlier this afternoon, there was a quoted reference to Rosemary Brown's perspective on the three elements she would want to exist in our system: equality, peace and equal opportunity. I see in it a tremendous amount of merit, and I understand, having listened to her, what she means by it. But I am going to raise the Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario peace curriculum matters that surfaced a while back. I know this is a personal item—first of all, I, like Mr. Johnston, am involved in the peace movement—but do we have some guidelines from the ministry yet, which is basically what we were calling upon?

Ms. Dickson: No, we do not, as far as I know. I am in the professional development department and deal with curriculum. We do not always get documents immediately when they are released, but as far as I know there is not anything available on peace.

I would mention that the Canadian Teachers' Federation has headed up an initiative on peace education, and the Ontario Teachers' Federation is now picking that up with the Canadian International Development Agency. We are undertaking a project jointly with them, and our federation is going to be involved in that, but it is still in the fairly formative stages.

Mr. Jackson: I am aware of the national initiatives. I am just anxious that we develop the curriculum quickly in Ontario. The treatment of the subject is a concern. I hope you will continue to press the ministry to develop appropriate and sensitive guidelines for Ontario children. I commend you, even though we did not quite agree on exactly the tone of one of the recommendations within that document on peace studies from FWTAO.

As to my third and final question—I cannot find it in the report but I distinctly remember hearing it and I wrote it down, and I would like for you to please expand on it for me—you stated that with

the changing family makeup, alternative models for parent participation should be encouraged. I am very excited by that statement. Could you please tell us more about that, briefly? I know it is not so much about goals but it has more to do with access and continuum. I would be anxious to just hit on one or two points of what you meant in that, from an elementary perspective, because we have heard something about this issue at the secondary level.

Mrs. Hunter: I will speak from the experience of the school in which I work. We must accommodate the fact that the parents are primarily working parents and are not able to get in during the school day and are not able to see the school program in operation, unfortunately—although, fortunately, more and more businesses are allowing parents to take time away to come to assemblies or to come to special events at the school. I think that is a wonderful sort of thing.

We, for instance, will schedule parent interviews early in the morning, providing coffee and a doughnut or whatever, and in the evening. More than that, we have parent liaison groups which discuss matters of mutual concern. We have parent work groups at night. Our children are very much involved in the publishing of their own books. The parent work groups will come in to make covers for the books, to help type them, to help edit them, and to help put them together. They actually see the children's work and have an opportunity to speak with the teacher and with other parents on an informal basis.

The school is, to my mind, one of the stable influences in the community now for children and for parents, and should be used, not on a 24-hour basis, but—

Mr. Jackson: Why not?

Mrs. Hunter: It is for community use. In our school, those are some of the ways that we have tried to encourage parents to come in, to chat with us on an informal basis, to talk about things, to be in a classroom and at least to be able to see around the room what is happening.

Ms. Dickson: I would like to just add to that an example I was reading about yesterday where a teacher was making Father's Day cards with her class. Of course, in many classes, that creates a number of problems. The teacher spent some time talking about the role of a father or someone who was an important person in their life, someone they looked up to and that sort of thing, and left it then for the students to make their card for the appropriate person.

One student made one for an uncle, and someone else for an aunt, or someone else who is

really important. The one that really struck me was the student who made a card for her father, who had died a few months before that, and that was her way of remembering him. I think teachers do find very creative ways of dealing with situations like that within the classroom.

1630

Mr. Jackson: I would like to go on—I wish we had more time—but in fairness I will pass.

Madam Chairman: I think you have just highlighted, when you talked about creativity and the tolerance of differences, some of the strengths in our system today that perhaps were not there when we went to school. It is very encouraging to see that. I know that members could probably go on all afternoon talking to you. Technically, we have run out of time but I know, after the contribution you have made, that both Mr. Keyes and Mrs. O'Neill would like to have a very brief question and/or comment.

Mr. Keyes: I will make it very brief. I appreciate the presentation. In your second paragraph on page 2—I was listening to it out of the room when you said it, so correct me if my interpretation from afar was incorrect—you speak of kind of the ownership of the delivery system remaining with the professional educator. We talked this morning with other groups, and you mention it in your own brief in about three places that I have noticed, about the involvement of parents, but you then kind of drop the wall towards the delivery. I think the thing we have heard so often, and we did today, in parent groups is the parental involvement.

I just want you to justify a bit further on the philosophical approach that the whole delivery system must "be owned by the professional educator." I am not sure to what level you are referring. I consider everyone who has gained a teaching certificate becomes a professional educator, and yet at the same time I am not so naïve as to believe that we are the fount of all knowledge as the best way to deliver that system and that there are equal abilities outside of the professional system to assist us in the method of delivery.

That paragraph bothers me slightly. You say the right things elsewhere in the brief. That seems to stick out quite boldly where you specifically say, "We remain convinced that it is the responsibility of the professional educator to determine how the learning should take place." That is an area I would like you to justify further.

Miss Corbett: It may seem a bit schizophrenic, but I think it was done in response to the

context of the Radwanski report, where we see perhaps a nonprofessional educator making some fairly sweeping statements about how children should be tested, how they should learn, the mastering of learning and that type of thing. I suspect that we were sort of looking over our shoulder at another context when we made that statement in this document.

Mr. Keyes: I am looking at the whole partnership idea. We all talk about it being a partnership. A partnership does not end halfway down the road. The partnership should be there. We should have faith in ourselves with our influence within the system, as the professional educator, to temper the other perhaps sometimes impractical recommendations that might come from those not so involved with it.

Mrs. Hunter: I think perhaps we acknowledge that we all have a share in the goals of the education of children—all of us, parents, educators or whatever—but the delivery, or the strategies for delivery, perhaps should be in the hands of educators. We are the people who are trained. Parents and other people tend to have a very backward view, "This is the way I learned spelling, by this particular method, using these particular kinds of strategies." That is not the way we do it now. They look back and say, "Gee, that was a great system." We tend to put on rosy glasses when we look back.

Mr. Mahoney: No wonder they cannot spell.

Mrs. Hunter: I have a son, if I may be personal, who probably never will be adequate at it. I think that is what we talked about. You tell us what you want us to do, but do not necessarily tell us how to do it and at least allow us an opportunity, because in our profession a lot of people want to tell us how to do it, as you have noticed.

Mr. Mahoney: Ours, too.

Mr. Keyes: That is true. I guess I would be just more inclined to want to leave the door open than your closing it on them there. I would hate to see it closed to the extent that you seem to suggest; that is all. You keep talking about results and the reports about them. We heard about identification and placement review committees today. I am glad to hear you mention about being somewhat more accommodating to the most common problems. One, you recall, was that they wanted IPRCs outside their working hours, if at all possible, even evening times.

Mrs. Hunter: Essentially, what happens in the actual school experience is that when parents object to strategies, we attempt to have them in to

see the sorts of things we are doing. We attempt to show them what we are doing on the computer. We ask them to come in and observe or to help, and nine times out of 10 that wins them over: "Gee, this is so much more interesting than when I was at school. I can see what you're trying to get at." We change slowly. There is the fear of change.

Mr. Keyes: I will leave that, but I hope that we will look at it. Despite our training, how adequate or sometimes inadequate that may have been, there may be some other people who have participated in our community who have spent all of their educational lifetime learning about child development and they may have much more knowledge of what might be appropriate to work than we have as people who educate. Just do not close it totally, is all I am saying.

Mrs. O'Neill: I am glad you did mention, and have again quoted, our Premier in his primary initiative, because I think that is one of his favourite initiatives, on which he speaks from his heart.

Mr. Jackson: I do not know if he will fund from his pocket.

Mrs. O'Neill: He does that. We are doing that. We are initiating this program in September.

I have to say that you and your federation have been most helpful in helping us see ways in which that could be done with limited resources. I want to put that into the record. I think I have said that to other groups in a more informal setting.

I do notice that in this brief—and maybe this is going to come forward in the fall—you have only one line specifically in reference to special education. I know how the changes to the Education Act in that field have changed your whole responsibility area. I wonder if it has changed your philosophy and goals of education. I certainly know it has done some changing of the terms of the collective agreements I have had some dealings with.

I am sure this must be something you look at and talk about quite a bit, particularly with the thrust of integration—and it does seem to be coming even from what we sometimes consider the archaic halls over in the Mowat Block—but there will likely be even more integration. Certainly that is part of the Education Act and the definition, as initiated by Bette Stephenson, of the special education student. Could you comment a bit about how or if that is changing your philosophy and/or goals of education?

Mrs. Hunter: I will speak very briefly and from a personal, as well as the federation's, standpoint. Not necessarily. I was involved in special education for 10 years. I was integrating students at that particular time. In the school I work in, we are integrating primary social adjustment students all the time.

I applaud the move to recognize special education. We meet on a very regular basis in order to discuss students with special needs, both remedial and enrichment. I think that is wonderful. I think we are attempting to accommodate all of the special needs of students. This is why the class-size reduction of primary grades has been particularly helpful to us; we can do some early identification, we can work with some problems. But we need to have a more individual approach. There is just no way that you can do that with all of the others.

Ms. Dickson: I do not think I have anything much to add, except to say that we have, on an ongoing basis, been monitoring what has been happening in the schools. Certainly, some of our members have some very specific concerns that we would be glad to discuss with you further in the fall.

Miss Corbett: There has been a change in workload, which has been addressed. You are quite right.

Madam Chairman: I would like to thank the federation of women teachers' associations for coming before us today. You have certainly made a valuable contribution. As every member has mentioned today, your brief was absolutely excellent and we commend you for it.

Mrs. Hunter: Thank you for having us.

1640

Madam Chairman: The next delegation will be the Federation of Catholic Parent-Teacher Associations of Ontario. Come forward, please. We apologize that we are running a little late. As you can tell, we have had a number of stimulating presentations this afternoon, and we hope you will forgive us. We will certainly make sure that you get your full time allotment.

Please identify yourselves for the purposes of electronic Hansard. You can begin your brief whenever you are ready. We hope you will have time left over at the end for us to ask some more stimulating questions, or perhaps you will be providing the stimulating answers.

FEDERATION OF CATHOLIC PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS OF ONTARIO

Mr. Smith: My name is Patrick Smith. I am president of the Federation of Catholic Parent-

Teacher Associations of Ontario. I am a developer and a farmer in northern Ontario.

Mr. Monk: My name is Michael Monk. I am the vice-president of the federation. I am a parent from Ajax, involved in my local parent-teacher association. I am also a principal of a Catholic secondary school in Metropolitan Toronto, Bishop Francis Marrocco Secondary School.

Mrs. Schroder: My name is Martha Schroder and I am a parent. I am executive secretary to the Federation of Catholic Parent-Teacher Associations of Ontario.

Mr. Smith: Because of the time factor, I thought I would read through the summary, starting on page 17. Although it is a brief synopsis of the gist of what is in the brief, perhaps your questions and comments after would suffice.

I would like to point out at the very beginning that this brief is presented from the perspective of Catholic parents from across Ontario. The views expressed in the brief are their views, and we are simply presenting them to you as we have received them.

The following is a synopsis of these views and beliefs, as contained in the brief.

Student success, to whatever degree, is the ultimate goal of education. The provisions of the individual to attain success must be provided by our education system, while the attainment rests with the individual.

The education system must be directly influenced by parents who, in turn, must fully support the system in order for it to be effective. The Catholic system of education in Ontario promotes love of God, self, family and country; an appreciation of our Catholic faith and moral traditions; a respect for authority; an appreciation of ethnic and cultural groups in our society and an acquisition of knowledge and skills that will assist all students in becoming educated and successful adults.

The Roman Catholic faith is the cornerstone of our Catholic school curriculum, and with God's help, our children will learn to develop their natural abilities and talents.

Course content must be presented along with the values that are transmitted through the courses. Our main educational objectives include learning about and living the Catholic faith; developing morally, socially, intellectually and physically; becoming more effective members of Canadian society and learning to appreciate individual and societal differences.

Catholic education is a partnership with the home, the school, the parish, educational associ-

ations and the marketplace all contributing to the development of the child.

The teacher must believe in the personal worth of every child and must assist the individual in choosing his or her personal goals and in making progress towards them.

The child should be introduced to the concept of the spiral curriculum at an early age and to the ideals and styles that make an educated person in adulthood.

The analytical-thinking approach with children is preferred to the intuitive-thinking process, although it is agreed that both have merit in some situations.

Elementary and secondary school principals should teach in the classroom at least 25 per cent of each day, and vice-principals should teach at least 75 per cent of the time. This will ensure that their teaching expertise will not be lost to the students.

Superior classroom teachers merit higher salaries but must remain in the classroom and should not be removed from teaching in favour of administrative and nonteaching duties.

Children should be encouraged to commit information to memory much more than at present. Number facts, multiplication facts, correct spelling and grammatical usage must all be learned and memorized in order for the child to become proficient in these skills.

We, as parents and later employers, must insist that our children be taught correctly how to read, write, spell, arrange thoughts and ideas in logical sequences and be able to do basic mathematical calculations before they leave elementary school. We also recognize that children will progress at their own rate and that there are special instances where children are handicapped in their learning abilities.

Individual counselling by the classroom teachers should be greatly encouraged in the early grades of elementary school, particularly with children coming from broken homes or suffering from other social upheaval and ethnic groups, especially those who are non-English-speaking.

Teacher professional development days must be limited and used for professional development purposes only, and parents and others in the school community interested in education should be able to participate actively in the professional development of teachers.

Teacher conduct is as important as teaching ability, particularly in the teaching of young children. The teacher is a leader and a trend setter and should not be a passive or permissive bystander. Good language usage, proper attire

and professional manner are essential. More stress should be placed in this area in teacher education programs.

Provision for the funding of education in Ontario through the taxing of property has almost reached its limit. Other methods must be found soon to augment property taxation and commercial and corporate taxation for education. New school construction and renovations alone will cost billions of dollars over the next decade.

Portable classrooms are generally unacceptable, should never be considered as permanent and should be phased out as soon as possible.

Students dropping out of school before graduation present a very complex situation. It is not enough to insist that the student remain in school just to graduate. We may try to influence his or her remaining in school, but we first have to discover what the student's view of educational success really is and then assist him or her in attaining that success. The so-called professional student is more of a detriment than an asset in our society.

The establishment of school-based child care centres is a complex and sensitive issue which will require more study. As Catholic parents, we believe that we have the prime responsibility for caring for our children prior to and while they are in school. Of course, there are necessary instances, but detrimental social influences and increased pecuniary emulation are constantly challenging the togetherness of family life. The community drop-in centres can be very useful.

The Ministry of Education should be more rigid regarding the subject matter to be taught, especially in the elementary core subjects and secondary school subjects. Greater emphasis must be placed on correct language usage, basic mathematical calculation, reading, comprehension and spelling, with less flexibility allowed by school boards and individual teachers. This will encourage a more uniform standard of education throughout the province.

It is our view that religious education programs in our secondary schools should receive the full credit status of one credit per school year. Religious education should also be regarded as a teachable subject and accepted as such at all faculties of education in Ontario.

Teachers must share program content and methodology with parents. Parents entrust their children to teachers for the purposes of educating, but they do not abdicate their basic rights to know what is being taught and have some input into educational programs.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much, Mr. Smith. You certainly have been true to your word and very briefly and succinctly put your position forward. It might interest you to know, with reference to your item 2, "The education system must be directly influenced by parents, who, in turn, must fully support the system in order for it to be effective," that concept was very strongly supported by a group of parents who were here this morning with the Alliance for Children. They made the analogy that the parents are here for the marathon and the professionals are here for the sprint. I think they would certainly agree with your comment there.

1650

Mr. Mahoney: I would just would commend your one comment particularly, where you say, on the bottom of page 20, that you believe you have "the prime responsibility for the caring for our children prior to and while they are in school." I think frankly that is an attitude that needs to grow more in the community, whether it is in the Catholic education system or elsewhere, so I certainly agree with that.

I am curious though. From the tenor of the summary—and not having had the benefit of the entire brief being presented, I am at a little bit of risk here—I kind of get the sense that you are very much committed to back-to-basics, that you are very much committed to perhaps the type of education that you had and that I had, where there was lot of stress on memory and on rote-type of learning. "Sit down and read this and commit it to memory. You don't have to understand it necessarily, but you had better memorize it." I get that impression on the top of page 19 and again, in the first full paragraph on page 21.

You are nodding in agreement that I am interpreting your position correctly on that. That flies somewhat contrary to the vast majority of presenters whom we have dealt with, even presenters involved in Catholic education who believe that education should be more general, should teach a youngster how to learn rather than just simply forcing him or her to commit something to memory.

I wonder if you could just maybe expand on your views and perhaps justify them a little more.

Mr. Smith: I might comment on that. It brings to mind what somebody in the last group said about "leave the professional teaching up to the professionals," being the teachers. What I wanted to reiterate is that these are comments coming from parents, just ordinary parents from across the province, so it was interesting for us to

hear what they had to say and we simply reiterated in the brief what they are saying.

So there seems to be that feeling out there, that perhaps we should be, as you say, getting back to the basics.

Mr. Mahoney: I did not say it. I said you said it.

Mr. Smith: You said what we said.

Mr. Mahoney: There you go.

Mr. Smith: But yes, that is the feeling. You are quite right; that is the feeling that we have.

Mr. Mahoney: Do you have a sense though—I noticed in the questionnaire that Mr. Johnston had done in his riding, which was very good in many areas, but I noticed one of the questions was, “Do you think you had a better education than your children?”

If I am correct in my memory, the answer was some 60 per cent of the people felt they did. It was a very large percentage. It might not have been 60. I really have to question that—not question the results, not question the fact that the people may have said that, but question if they really understood the question. Have they really analysed that? Because I have to tell you, I have three kids in the system and I am around kids all the time and I think they are getting a far better education today than I got certainly, and that was available to us in the 1950s and 1960s.

I just wonder if this is not an easy answer for someone to give, when asked the question, “What do you think we need to do about education today?” You know, “Are you still beating your spouse?” Is it a question that really has to be asked with some proper backup and with some analytical thought before an answer is simply given. “Make them memorize that stuff. Make them sit down and learn that.”

Mr. Monk: If I may just comment on a couple of things. I come here wearing two hats, one as an educator and the other as a parent with kids in both elementary school and high school.

As Pat pointed out, this is a response of a lot of parents throughout the province, in terms of, “Get them back to basics,” to quote what has been quoted and so forth, and asking why a student cannot recite a few lines from *The Merchant of Venice*, or whatever the case may be. I think Mr. Johnston’s survey might have indicated that parents feel there is a certain need for that sort of business or a perceived need for it.

I agree with you wholeheartedly when you discussed the fact of the elements of creativity and the new forms and the new methodology that is used. The processes, I think, are improved

greatly. We discussed this and anticipated the question. One of the things we felt was that it provided an increased discipline within the student. Self-discipline of a student to go home and memorize a poem or work on a particular piece in Latin or whatever the case may be is something that has been totally shelved and not really done whatsoever, at least in my knowledge. It is something that a lot of parents have expressed to us, saying there was some value in sweat and toil—mainly sweat and toil—in having to sit down and memorize a piece and to come back and recite it.

I concur that oftentimes when that was done, there was not a great amount of insight placed into the content that was being memorized, but oftentimes the process used by individuals in those days—I include myself in those days—was fruitful. There is the question that Latin is a dead language, yet there was some merit in studying it. Students might say: “Why did we ever bother studying Latin? We never use it.” It was not so much that as, indirectly, the benefit of syntax and so on aided everyone. There is a perception by the parents that some rote learning would perhaps be beneficial.

Mr. Mahoney: I think if it is for mind exercising, there may be some benefits there, to do some calisthenics mentally and try to memorize things to kind of wake you up in the morning. It is great when you are 30 years old to be able to whip out a Shakespearean quote or something. I do not know what Latin does for you except somebody says, “Oh, he went to school.”

Mr. Jackson: It helps with the grammar. That is it.

Mr. Mahoney: I never did learn that. That is the problem. I skipped school that day, I hate to admit.

I want to ask another question if I might on the portable classroom issue. I have a lot of that in my community of Mississauga with our growth and I have dealt with it for years. First of all, we do not build instant communities and we do not build all the schools and the facilities in the community and then move the people in. So there is always going to be a holding school concept in a new, growing community.

As an educator, perhaps you could answer, or as a parent: Is it really that much of a problem if a child is educated in a portable, not necessarily for all the school life, obviously—and there are kids who have had to go through that—but for a period of time, or is it more important who is doing the educating? I just wonder, have we really blown the issue of portables out of proportion?

Mr. Keyes: How many portables at your high school?

Mr. Mahoney: Ask my constituents. They might know the answer.

Mr. Monk: I will make one or two comments. One of them is that it has always been the adage of our schools that bricks and mortar do not make the school, it is the people who make the school. I have seen it done in a number of different areas where people have survived portables and really lived to tell about it.

I do think it is a shame, but I have seen individuals go through their entire educational career in portables, specifically in some of the secondary fields. There is burgeoning growth in the suburbs—and Ajax and the Durham region are among them—where we have kids in portables for almost their entire secondary school career, or elementary school career for that matter.

What parents whom we talked to brought out were concerns regarding safety and health factors in portables. It overcame the whole bricks and mortar sense. It was not necessary that you have fine gyms and great heating systems and air-conditioned buildings, that was not the point. It was elementary or basic concerns we have about portables that have to be addressed.

Pat or Martha, maybe you want to talk about some of those.

Mrs. Schroder: Certainly, I have been there. A lot of the victims who die from asphyxiation—I have worked in emergency as well as in intensive care—did not die from the fire itself but from smoke inhalation. When you are sharing a common ventilation system and there is a group like that together, with the building materials used, it is very hazardous.

Mr. Mahoney: I am not suggesting that we condone it, I am tying the portable issue into the quality of the education. Obviously, if we could do the Incrapac concept more I think that would be an improvement over the portables, if for no other reason than that the kid does not have to go outside to go to the washroom and feels perhaps a little more a part of the school in that system; but I was relating the issue of portables more to the quality of the education.

1700

Mr. Monk: I think that came up.

Mr. Mahoney: I can understand your answer, though.

Mrs. Schroder: It is physical.

Mr. Mahoney: It all relates.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I have just a couple of comments. I must say that my experience in

elementary and secondary school—maybe not secondary; I forget whether we did much in the way of memorization—

Mr. Mahoney: You cannot remember.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Yes, I cannot remember.

If there would have been one reason I would ever have considered dropping out of school, it would have been memorization. I absolutely hated it and I do not see the worth of it today either. I remember one experience. We were assigned to learn the 23rd psalm, and I left my Bible at school and used the Bible I had at home. Unfortunately, it was the wrong version and I flunked.

I do not know; maybe you can expand on why you think memorization is so important and why it is so useful in terms of teaching discipline to kids. There have to be other more productive, less—school is not fun. You might in fact teach a few kids more discipline, but instead of a 30 per cent dropout rate go back to the 50 per cent and 60 per cent dropout rates that we had. What have you accomplished?

Mr. Smith: I am not sure if that is a question or a comment.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: It is a comment you might want to respond to.

Mr. Monk: I am not defending this, in the sense that what we are presenting are the representations and concerns of a number of parents. I concur. I was not an English specialist and never particularly liked memorizing psalms, sonnets or whatever the case may be, but I could probably recite the periodic table in chemistry for you without too much concern because I was interested in that general area.

Again, in expressing the views of the parents, it is not so much the specific content for that exercise as much as an exercise to go through that is something that might be worth while. At least, that was the general tone of the representations we received in that matter.

It might be, very simply, a reversion to the back to basics of education that they were concerned about. I do not want you to really harp on this as being the be-all of the Catholic parents' association because it really is not, but it is a sense and a general feeling that they have some concerns about getting back to the fundamentals of what they perceive and what we perceive as solid foundations in education.

It does not mean to exclude, by any way, the creative methods and processes that teachers have come up with and use very fruitfully, from mastery of learning to whatever throughout the

educational scheme, but rather to say, "Here are some things we might look at or others might look at that will get us back to some of the very foundations of what we consider education to be."

Mr. Smith: I could just add to that. Especially in learning languages, there is a certain amount of things you have to put to memory. That is just a matter of fact; that is all. I think that is probably what they are getting at here.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I have one other question, dealing with your recommendation on page 18 about superior classroom teachers being paid higher salaries, which when I was on the school board I think I remember being discussed many times and has been since as well. I guess I would like to get an idea of how you would ever go about doing the measurement, which is one of the real difficulties in assessing classroom teachers.

I tend to agree with the comment about that, of trying to keep our good teachers who go into administration in the classroom as much as possible. We talked earlier about term appointments so that teachers are not kept out of the classroom for ever if they get supervisory responsibilities. How would you go about assessing teachers and then deciding the merit pay in a fair and equitable way?

Mr. Smith: Unfortunately, they did not tell us how to do that. It would be extremely difficult. Of course, merit pay has been discussed in the past, not just with teachers but with other professional groups as well. It is an extremely difficult process to go through. I do not know how one would do it, really, but I suppose it is in the back of their minds also that a better teacher should receive a better reward, whether it be in cash or in better working conditions or whatever. Perhaps the merit there could have a more encompassing meaning, not just salary but other things too.

Madam Chairman: We have a final question from Mr. Keyes.

Mr. Keyes: Oh, I thought I was cut off. I do not want to keep harping on page 19, the memorization. I too remember the days of the one-room country school where the facilities were out behind the school and all the rest of it. The first thing you were told by the teacher on the first day of school was that you had 500 lines of memory work to learn before the year was up, and the sooner you got at it the sooner you got rid of that bad medicine. I still remember a poor young fellow who, on the last day of school in June in about grade 8, was still struggling to try to

get some of it. Without those last few lines he was going to spend another year in grade 8. You can imagine the pressure.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: How did you do?

Mr. Keyes: The poor guy did not get beyond grade 8, I must say, not to this day. I just think that emphasis is unfortunate.

There are two or three things. First of all, there are much better ways, as has already been said, to try to develop the same skill that memorization was used for. It can be done in other ways. The other one on all of that rote business, basically the dilemma you have is what do you do with the student who does not achieve the rote learning, the memorization rate that you want. You yourselves go on to say in one of the other points that you do not want the perpetual student sort of thing. The professional student is more of a detriment than an asset to our society, yet if we are going to try to have them all reach a certain standard before they pass on, we are back to what created, as was said, the 60 per cent dropout rate.

Again, you have made so many other good points in the whole presentation, we should not harp at you on that one. Even though you are reflecting what parents are saying, I do not think there is any way in today's society that you can justify those as appropriate methods of attempting to educate a child. I certainly could not support them.

Mr. Monk: Could I just make a comment? We were looking at a skill as opposed to a prescribed outcome. I think that is what the comment was and what the parents were looking at. They were looking at a skill as opposed to a prescribed outcome. If someone recited a different version of the 23rd psalm, I do not think he would be penalized. If he could recite a different version of the 23rd psalm, then one would conclude that he had gone through the exercise and achieved it successfully. I think that is the general tone the parents were trying to get through to us.

It was not specifically that if they had 498 lines memorized rather than 500 they would fail grade 8 and therefore have to repeat the year. The situation was really that the parents, as indicated to us, were looking for a form of mental gymnastics, as indicated in one of the comments, as really being a viable form of intellectual exercise. That is what they were saying, if I interpret it correctly.

Mr. Keyes: You do acknowledge the different rates at which they are going to learn, and you have to acknowledge at the same time that some are not going to reach the standards set.

Mr. Monk: Oh, yes.

Mr. Keyes: You try to put standards before they can move from one grade to the next, and that lock-step approach, master learning concept just will not work.

Mr. Monk: We encounter students studying at various levels who will never memorize the arithmetic tables. Effectively, you give them a calculator and say: "That is fine. Go ahead from this point of view."

Mr. Keyes: You can still make good accountants too.

Mr. Monk: I would worry about an accountant who could not add without a machine.

Madam Chairman: I would like to thank the Federation of Catholic Parent-Teacher Associations of Ontario for coming before us today and giving us the benefit of the thoughts of its members.

Just before I wind up the select committee on education for today, I have a few reminders for members. We will not be sitting tomorrow morning. We will be reconvening at 2 o'clock, at which time I have the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward) and the Deputy Minister of Education, Mr. Shapiro; but there will be a steering committee meeting at 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

Mr. Jackson: Madam Minister—or Madam Chair—

Madam Chairman: Thank you for the promotion, but—

Mr. Jackson: I know it is hard to get one in your caucus, but anyway—actually, any one of us can have any three portfolios.

Given that these hearings are viewed widely through the Queen's Park cable network, could I recommend that when you conclude tomorrow you give a clear and concise report, from a prepared text if you are more comfortable, of the next phase for the viewing audience; when it will start and generally a description of the areas we will be focusing on, and again reiterate that they may write to this committee and indicate how they may write.

It strikes me that it would save us having to put ads in the paper another time to inform people of what we are doing, and that written briefs are always welcome. The interest in the program, I am hearing in the community, is very high, so I think it would be very helpful if you would put into perspective the next stage and when it starts.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Jackson. Actually, the clerk and I had already discussed that and had planned to do it, but it certainly does not hurt to reinforce it and I appreciate your bringing that up.

The committee adjourned at 5:12 p.m.

CONTENTS

Wednesday, July 27, 1988

Philosophy and Goals of Education	E-425
Alliance for Children—Ontario	E-425
Ontario Catholic Secondary School Principals' Association	E-438
Afternoon sitting	E-449
Charles E. Pascal	E-449
Canadian Federation of Independent Business	E-459
Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario	E-466
Federation of Catholic Parent-Teacher Associations of Ontario	E-478
Adjournment	E-482

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Chairman: Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)

Vice-Chairman: Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)

Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)

Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)

Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)

Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)

Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)

Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)

O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)

Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)

Clerk: Mellor, Lynn

Staff:

Porter, Ann, Research Officer, Legislative Research Service

Witnesses:

From the Alliance for Children—Ontario:

Walker, Margaret, President

Welsh, May Ann, Ontario Association for Community Living

Nichols, Eva, Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario

Cowie, Jill, Easter Seal Society

From the Ontario Catholic Secondary School Principals' Association:

Rooney, Jim, President

Kutz, Stan, Director

DiRocco, Dan, Treasurer

Ware, John, Chairman, Social Issues Committee

Individual Presentation:

Pascal, Dr. Charles E., Chairman, Ontario Council of Regents for Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology

From the Canadian Federation of Independent Business:

Andrew, Judith, Director, Provincial Affairs, Ontario

Bennett, Jim, Vice-President, Legislative Affairs

From the Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario:

Hunter, Pat, Treasurer

Dickson, Marilyn, Executive Assistant

Corbett, Victoria, Executive Assistant

From the Federation of Catholic Parent-Teacher Associations of Ontario:

Smith, Patrick, President

Monk, Michael, Vice-President

Schroder, Martha, Executive Secretary



ASON
X12
1988
E28



Government
Publications

No. E-11

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Select Committee on Education

Philosophy and Goals of Education

First Session, 34th Parliament

Thursday, July 28, 1988

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario
Editor of Debates: Peter Brannan

CONTENTS

Contents of the proceedings reported in this issue of Hansard appears at the back, together with a list of the members of the committee and other members and witnesses taking part.

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues can be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at (416) 965-2159.

Hansard subscription price is \$16.00 per session, from: Sessional Subscription Service, Information Services Branch, Ministry of Government Services, 5th Floor, 880 Bay Street, Toronto, M7A 1N8. Phone (416) 965-2238.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Thursday, July 28, 1988

The committee met at 2:10 p.m. in room 151.

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS OF EDUCATION (continued)

Madam Chairman: I would like to call this afternoon's session of the select committee on education to order. The ministerial delegation has arrived.

Mr. Keyes: We will have a little benediction first.

Mr. Mahoney: I didn't hear the trumpets.

Hon. Mr. Ward: That is my staff sitting at the back of the room.

Madam Chairman: Those 3,000 people out there are all ministry staff. We know that they are keeping very busy these days.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Most of them are on holidays.

Madam Chairman: We are very pleased to have with us today the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward). The Minister is directly to my left. To his left is Dr. Bernard Shapiro, the Deputy Minister of Education; and beside Dr. Shapiro, Bill Lipischak, who has, I am sure, a very officious title at the ministry, which I have forgotten for the moment.

Mr. Lipischak: Director of the program implementation and review branch.

Madam Chairman: Welcome to our committee. I understand the procedure will be that the Minister of Education will start off with a fairly brief statement, after which he and Dr. Shapiro will be open for questions from the members.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Hon. Mr. Ward: Thank you, Madam Chairman. In fact, I was hoping to begin with a fairly lengthy opening statement, then Dr. Shapiro and I will look forward to the opportunity to interact with the members of the committee and respond. I want to begin by thanking the committee for inviting the deputy and I to come here today.

Over the course of the past few days, my staff and I have been following very closely the deliberations of the committee, and I have to say that I have been impressed by the variety of the presentations and the depth of your questions, and the major themes which have evolved. I

believe that a review of the goals and philosophy of education is a very useful starting point in his committee's agenda, because it allows you to place your thoughts within the context of changes in educational philosophy that have taken place over time.

As legislators, it is useful, from time to time, to deliberate on philosophical beliefs and to state and reassess our goals. On the first day of your hearings, Duncan Green, assistant deputy minister in charge of learning programs, stressed the notion that Ontario's education system has been marked by certain swings of the philosophical pendulum. The pendulum swings between a strong focus on the needs of the individual child and a broader focus upon the social, economic and technological expectations that we place upon our system of education.

Today we seem to have shifted our focus toward broader social and economic expectations. I believe that shifting perspectives is a normal and healthy phenomenon; however, what is important is that we do not swing too far or too fast. We should remember the best of what we have learned from the places we have already been. We should collect, like learning children, the experience and ideas to which we are exposed, but we should then decide, as those entrusted with leadership in education, the directions in which to proceed.

We must make these decisions with our own wisdom and instincts, not just as legislators but as parents, with the best and most capable advice of which we can avail ourselves and with a commitment to sensitive and open-minded consultation with those who join us in the delivery of education.

As legislators, we have an opportunity to suggest directions that will influence the assumptions, perspectives and decisions of our next generation. I hope today's students will confront and resolve the challenges of environmental abuse, poverty, cancer and acquired immune deficiency syndrome. They will face a new type of workplace, and they will need to adapt and to innovate.

I believe we have a responsibility to provide our children, not only with the knowledge and skills which will make them into well-rounded individuals, but also with the awareness and the

ingenuity they will need to tackle the challenges of their day. The philosophical pendulum may swing, but clearly, the responsibility of those of us in the educational system is to satisfy the needs of both the individual student and to prepare the individual for new social challenges.

Over the past two weeks, a number of themes have surfaced and resurfaced during the presentations and discussions before your committee. I would like to draw together some of those questions and issues and to describe briefly some of the activities my ministry has recently undertaken in some of those areas. I also hope to pose a few questions which I hope will stimulate some discussion today and in your September meetings.

First, there have been a number of critical questions raised about the nature and extent of our school curriculum. You have asked if our curriculum is effective; is it relevant; is it overcrowded. Should our curriculum serve the needs of the individual student or should it serve the needs of specific groups, and how does it serve the needs of society as a whole?

We expect today's education system to teach our children about important social issues, but at the same time we must ensure that our curriculum is sufficient to prepare each and every child for an increasingly challenging world and workplace.

Many of you will be familiar with our secondary curriculum document, Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, OSIS, which was introduced in 1984. OSIS increased the core curriculum requirements for our schools and also synthesized the options available to students by introducing three standardized levels of difficulty across the system: the basic, general and advanced levels.

There have been a number of commentaries on this structure in your presentations and I genuinely hope you will pursue the matter further. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on the subject of streaming when you report this fall.

I should mention that, beyond the question of streaming and organizational and diploma requirements of OSIS, there have been important curriculum developments coming out of the secondary education review project.

Over the last few years, we have been developing a new generation of OSIS documents for the intermediate and senior divisions, which are much more explicit in their content, skills expectations, their teaching strategies and in their evaluation criteria. We have nearly completed the development and release of these documents and we are just beginning to see the

positive effects that their implementation is having on the system.

A good example of this is the new intermediate and senior science guideline, which improves upon our old science curriculum. The new document is broader and undertakes to integrate teaching efforts in the context of the social, environmental and moral considerations that face us all. Our new science curriculum also addresses the practical applications of science and technology in society. We developed this guideline following upon the findings of the second international study in science education and the report of the Science Council of Canada. In addition, we had invaluable input from educators from elementary, secondary and post-secondary levels.

1420

At the elementary level this government is now providing increased funding for new textbooks, new learning materials, in-service training, laboratory equipment, supplies and safety devices, all of which are assisting in the implementation of science much earlier in the schools' curriculum. I have noted that the response from parents, teachers and, most important, our students, has been very positive.

We are also busy with the renewal of the curriculum in the elementary panel. The curriculum document entitled *The Formative Years*, which currently serves as a guideline in the primary and junior grades, was introduced in 1975. It is largely a reflection of the educational philosophy of that time.

I believe that we must re-examine our objectives and approaches at the primary and junior levels, as was recommended by the early primary education project. Work has already begun to develop a new document which will be more explicit in its learning expectations with regard to skills, concepts and attitudes right across the curriculum for the primary and junior divisions. In fact, this government has made renewal of the primary and junior divisions a major priority.

In March I announced that our school-based learning skills project will begin this September. Its goal is to enhance understanding of how young children actually learn and then to share the results across Ontario to help improve upon teaching and assessment techniques in the primary years.

Related to this is our work on the development of learning benchmarks, learning profiles and support materials for teachers to use in assessing and reporting student achievement from junior kindergarten to grade 6. Of course, our initiatives

in reducing class sizes in grades 1 and 2 are also going into effect this September.

Our work in the primary division is particularly exciting. The renewal that has begun in the development of a new primary-junior curriculum document is really another major step towards this government's rejuvenation of our education system.

The second major theme which has been raised, and one which is closely related to questions on curriculum, is the issue of assessment and accountability. What standards should we set for the students in our system? Who should set these standards? How should we report student progress to parents? What degree of consistency do we require in measuring achievement across Ontario?

You have asked these questions and you have heard a variety of opinions. In fact, since the elimination of provincial standardized examinations in 1967, this debate has never ceased in the education community. As I have stated before, I do believe that we have a responsibility to measure and report upon the value of our investment in education. We have a responsibility to ensure that parents have an accurate report on the effectiveness of school programs and of their children's progress in the system.

The members of this committee will remember that in June we announced our intention to conduct a provincial review in 1988-89 in reading and mathematics for grade 6 students. We will assess the literacy skills of Ontario's students as well as their abilities in arithmetic, measurement and geometry.

Provincial reviews are, I believe, an important and successful method of providing us with a spot check on the system. I am delighted that the response to our provincial reviews has been extremely positive all across the system and that this year's review is expected to inspire a large number of boards to participate voluntarily in full board reviews. Through these reviews we will amass information lists on student achievement and we will examine information on teaching practices. This will lead to program improvement at the school and at the board level.

I would also like to point out that my ministry has a variety of other important initiatives in the area of assessment. Our Ontario academic course teacher in-service program is an example. There has been a concern expressed about the degree of consistency in testing and examinations across the province, particularly at the exit year of secondary school. In response to this concern, we have conducted workshops for teachers with

the goal of regularizing the nature of examinations provided at the Ontario academic credit level.

A follow-up has been conducted. This spring we collected English Ontario academic course examinations from each and every secondary school across Ontario, and over the summer a team of teachers and university staff is examining them for quality and consistency. Each school will be reported to directly, and this fall we will release a provincial report on the degree of consistency. I am hopeful that this report will confirm that our efforts are improving the consistency of the senior level examinations which are offered across this province.

Testing is an important part of our system. At the provincial level, we have a responsibility to work with teachers to accurately assess the quality of the system and the quality of our children's learning. Parents are entitled to know how their children are doing! Parents are also entitled to know how well they are being served by the system for which they pay and upon which our society places deservedly high expectations.

With the development of learning profiles, province-wide benchmarks and new assessment methods in the early school years, and with our provincial reviews and new assessment criteria in the intermediate and senior grades, we have developed useful and productive assessment methods, and we are making the system more accountable.

A third major theme which has sparked the committee's interest over the past two weeks is teacher education. You have asked if our current preservice programs are appropriate. Do we supply sufficient in-service support? Should we examine the idea of an apprenticeship period? Are professional development days valuable? I do not intend to speak at any length on this subject today since we, along with the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mrs. McLeod), are still awaiting the arrival of a report from the teacher education review committee.

The interim discussion paper on teacher education produced by Michael Fullan and Michael Connelly has already sparked much interest. The review committee has received and reviewed reactions to the discussion paper, and I look forward to the final recommendations from the review committee itself.

I would like to comment briefly, however, on the quality and efforts of the teaching profession. In Ontario, we do have teachers of the highest quality. When we prescribe curriculum and when we implement our programs, it is by design and

by definition with the co-operation and the ingenuity of our teaching professionals. We ask and expect a great deal of the profession, because we must.

I look forward to discussing the report of the review committee with teachers in the field. In my time as minister, I have come to appreciate the dedication of this profession and the quality of the suggestions it offers when its ideas are sought on ways to make our system better.

Finally, I want to comment on the role of our secondary schools in assisting students in the transition to the world of work. I see this as a fourth important area of focus over the last two weeks at this committee. Is school the appropriate place for job training? Are the basic skills which our children acquire in our schools appropriate? Are we adequately preparing them for a life that may involve several career changes or adaptations? Clearly, we must provide our children with both the knowledge and the skills that will prepare them for tomorrow.

In Ontario, we are now in the third year of a \$13-million co-operative education incentive program. I was happy to note a positive reaction by several groups to our activities in this area. This project has proved to be a major success, and we estimate that this year we will have more than doubled student participation, from some 21,000 participants to nearly 47,000 participants.

These programs are breaking down barriers across Ontario. In Kapuskasing, a young francophone woman gets her first experience in veterinary medicine, while in Timmins, native students and their band councils work collectively with educators and employers to develop new skills and to open up new employment opportunities. Our access-to-employment plan targets special populations with creative programs developed by local boards.

One of the most attractive aspects of the program is its innovative nature. I understand that in Grey county former high school dropouts are now obtaining their diplomas and developing new skills in a senior citizens' home, many of whose occupants had become volunteer teachers.

1430

Another important initiative has been our bridges to the world of work program. One component of this program, the ties to business and industry incentive fund, has prepared students for direct entry into the workplace through locally designed projects such as career workshops, industrial awareness seminars and adopt-a-school programs. Teachers of technological

studies are also involved as they spend time learning about new technologies. When school opens this fall, other teachers will be teaching entrepreneurial studies as our new curriculum document generates courses to promote an understanding of the importance of entrepreneurship in the business community.

A recent Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development report features our new curriculum and places Ontario in the forefront in entrepreneurial education.

Dropouts continue to be a major area of concern. I am pleased with the progress of our student retention and transition projects, which were announced last September. This program was specifically designed to immediately start to address the unacceptably high levels of dropouts from Ontario schools and, in addition, to gather evidence of successful programs for application province-wide.

We have funded a number of innovative school board projects such as the Harambee project, targeted at black students in the North York board. The curriculum intervention project at the Sault Ste. Marie board offers special counselling and in-service assistance for basic and general level programs. Our co-op programs, bridges to the world of work and our student retention and transition projects have taken the initiative in providing skills training and hands-on work experience for a substantial number of students, while encouraging young people to remain in school.

I believe that to date we have been very successful with these initiatives, and I am particularly pleased with the many examples of coterminous boards working in co-operation to provide innovative programs.

I look forward to your comments and observations in this area and I hope you will pursue the matter with renewed vigour in your fall session. I have restricted my comments to four areas of interest: curriculum, assessment and accountability, teacher education and the transition of students to the world of work.

Clearly, there have been a number of other topics which have drawn and received your attention during the past few days. A number of groups have spoken to their particular needs and concerns. Clearly, the question of accommodating rights and needs in our society is a topic which demands our attention. We must never lose sight of the fact that the system is designed for the education of our children, no matter how our goals or philosophies evolve over time.

Children are our most valuable resource and they deserve to be our primary focus.

In closing, I want to congratulate you for your participation in these hearings and I would like to add my word of thanks to those who have made presentations to the committee. I look forward to your ideas, reflections and comments in the months ahead. Dr. Shapiro and I look forward also to the opportunity to respond to any questions that you might now have.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, minister. Mr. Mahoney, Mr. Johnston, Mr. Jackson and Mr. Keyes have indicated they have questions for the minister or the deputy. We will start with Mr. Mahoney.

Mr. Mahoney: Minister, there have been a number of people who have, as you have suggested, put forth varying viewpoints of how they think the education system can work, but there has been one theme that has been a little bit of a common theme that several people have mentioned, and it is the theme that deals with the examination that we are undertaking. I think one of our very first deputations used the analogy of pulling up the roots every seven years to examine the tree and not giving it enough time to grow. Are we doing that? That was their somewhat rhetorical question.

Dr. Pascal, chairman of the Ontario Council of Regents for Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, had a very interesting quote yesterday, which I would like to share with you. It goes as follows:

"In modern times, people's views about education differ. There is no general agreement about what the young should learn in relation to moral virtue or success in life, nor is it clear whether education should be more concerned with training the intellect or the character. Contemporary events have made the problem more difficult and there is no certainty whether education should be primarily vocational, moral or cultural. People have recommended all three. Moreover, there is no agreement as to what sort of education does promote moral virtue."

The person he was quoting was Aristotle in 340 BC. It could have been any one of us last week in questioning it.

Mr. Keyes: Or ministry officials.

Mr. Mahoney: That is right, or ministry officials.

Mr. Jackson: It would not have been in one line if it was from the minister.

Mr. Mahoney: That was not one line.

We have had various studies of course, many of which have been discussed: reports from Ken Dryden, the Macdonald report, Dr. Shapiro's report and the latest one, Radwanski's report. I guess the gist of my question out of those comments from the deputations that have come before us is, are we going to see some of the recommendations come forward from some of those reports? Second, is there a need to install a mechanism to deal with reports, not necessarily for implementation but more for public discussion and debate along the lines of what we have been doing in the past two weeks and what we will continue to do in September and October?

Hon. Mr. Ward: Thank you very much, Steve. Those are very interesting observations. Let me open by saying that certainly from my perspective I view the work of this committee as having precisely the opposite impact of that suggested by the deputant you referred to, that we are pulling up the tree to examine the roots. I think that is always the danger. There is a wide variety of opinions out there, many of which are very strongly held as to what is right and what is wrong with our system of education.

I was looking with my scheduling assistant at some of our activity over the past 10 months, and I think we have had something like 137 meetings with special interest groups and 76 meetings with boards of education. There is always plenty of opportunity and certainly no one is loath to take those opportunities to suggest what we should pull apart or put together as we seek to continue to renew the system, but I think it is a tendency that we have to resist. I think it is wrong to take one perspective or one analysis of the system and jump into it without clearly taking the time to analyse, to consult and to study the ramifications.

We have taken some criticism in the past year or so in the Legislature and elsewhere over our proclivity to go ahead with pilot projects, to test out some of the theories and the notions before implementing system-wide change.

Mr. Jackson: We will be getting to that in a minute.

Hon. Mr. Ward: I will tell you that I will not apologize for that for a moment because, frankly, I think it is the appropriate way in which you proceed with reform and renewal. I know the member for Scarborough West (Mr. R. F. Johnston) supports our methods in this regard because I notice in the recent survey that he did of his own constituents that clearly some of them

differ with some of the opinions he has put forward in the past.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I pride myself with always being in the minority.

Hon. Mr. Ward: That is true. No doubt that led you to the selection of your political philosophy and political party as well, but I really do not want to get into that further.

I guess if there is one thing that is distressing and discouraging as we move about the province and enter into these kind of debates is the increasing expectation on the part of parents and community and society at large that the school system has to be the cure for all of our ills, that the school system has to meet all of the needs of our children. There seems a diminishing recognition of the obligation of parents and other community agencies at large in terms of meeting the needs of our young people.

I am constantly faced with groups that say: "Let's add this to the school day. Let's make this a mandatory provision of the curriculum," everything from physical education. When you view it you can clearly see the worthiness of that intent, but we have to recognize that when we load the system up with this, something has to give, either that or the school day or the school year has to be lengthened substantially.

1440

Again, it is a rambling answer, and I will concede that, but I guess what I want to re-emphasize is that I do not believe this exercise is pulling up the tree to examine the roots. I think this is an exercise that should have been undertaken long ago. We have a rare opportunity here to provide a forum for all of those diverse points of view in a nonpartisan fashion. The Legislature has an opportunity here to really undertake a fundamental exercise in looking at all of those recommendations, those reports and studies, those initiatives, whether it be the early primary education report or the Dryden report, many of which we have acted upon aggressively already. It does give us an opportunity to pull it all together before we make large-scale, systemic kinds of changes.

Mr. Mahoney: I know my colleagues are eager to ask some questions as well, so I will be brief. Parental involvement was clearly another item that was discussed by many different groups, and questions were asked by members of this committee. I personally agree with your statement there.

The second part of my question or my concern deals with the number of reports that seem to

come forward on the particular issue. While I think it is healthy to be introspective and to look at our system on a regular basis, to try to determine, as I think you said in your address to be able to measure and report on the value of education in our society, it is important to do that on an ongoing basis.

Is there some mechanism that you or Dr. Shapiro could see to deal with these reports on a more effective basis so that the parents and the people in the education system feel they are being looked at, not just simply being put on a shelf and gathering dust? Is there some way we can get them out, not necessarily for implementation, not necessarily for ministerial direction, but at least for discussion and to stimulate debate to come up with new ideas that might be implemented some time down the road?

Hon. Mr. Ward: I think clearly there is. Again, I want to hark back to the point that I think this committee is a good example of the very kind of mechanism that is needed. I know Dr. Shapiro has some other thoughts, and at different times we have discussed other options for providing that very forum.

I want to come back, though, to the point that there is a suggestion that these reports come down through the system and there may be a perception that they are not specifically responded to. I will use two examples. Perhaps the best one would be the early primary education project, the EPEP report. I know when I first came into this ministry, one of the first questions that was raised as I wandered out into the hinterland was, what are you doing with EPEC, when are you going to respond to it?

When you look at the lengthy recommendations there—reducing class sizes, better training and a review of the curriculum—and you go through the many recommendations, you can see that clearly the government over the past three years has moved very aggressively on the overwhelming majority of the recommendations in that report.

Mr. Jackson, from time to time, has made reference to Ken Dryden's work and some of the things that he was saying as the youth commissioner and the recommendations that were made. If you look at the initiatives in co-operative education and the ties to business and industry and take Mr. Dryden's recommendations, you will see that is exactly what has been happening: the government has been responding to some of these recommendations.

Now it has not been a carte blanche, holus-bolus buying-in to what everyone tells us. I think

that would be wrong. I think we have to move tentatively on some of these initiatives. The streaming recommendations of Radwanski are a classic example. Lately, it seems to have become almost a rallying cry for reform. I am not so sure it is that simple a matter. I am not so sure we cannot create more problems than we seek to solve by reacting too quickly or aggressively without first giving very careful consideration to what the problem is and how it needs to be solved. I will let Dr. Shapiro respond further.

Dr. Shapiro: One of the ways I might respond is to suggest that we sometimes do run the risk of spending more time looking at what we are doing than doing what we are doing. I think some help could be provided in simply not doing as many reports as we frequently do and taking a little bit more time to figure out just which ones would be most relevant at any particular point in time.

Once reports have been written and received, we do have a fairly standard system for getting them out there and giving people an opportunity to respond. We then face the difficulty of the fact that, in general, the responses cancel each other out; that is, there always seem to be as many people on this side of a topic as there are on that side of a topic. If there are six solutions, people seem to divide themselves more or less equally. Everyone who responded then feels you are being unresponsive if you do not take his particular piece of advice.

One possible way around this that we have at least been considering, although we certainly have not made any decision on the matter, is to try to establish a more regularized forum for the minister in which one could bring together not only the people interested in professional education, with whom we have regular and ongoing relationships, but also people, for example, from the labour or business communities, so that there would be some kind of ongoing organization, a kind of educational forum, you might say, in which we could interact not only on the occasion of particular reports but as an ongoing policy sounding-board. That is one of the possibilities we are trying to work through.

Another comment I might make in this area, if you do not take me too literally—because if you take it literally it becomes unfortunate, I think—is that the fact that the system changes sometimes more frequently than seems absolutely appropriate is not altogether a waste of energy. That is, not that change is good for its own sake—we presume it is good only if it yields something better than you had before—but a certain amount of rethinking is energizing for people in the

system, for people who are watching the system and for people preparing for the system.

It is a constant challenge to assume that there must be a better way of doing this. You do not have to say that the way you are doing it is bad in order to ask that kind of question. I think one of the challenges of being an educator is to embrace that kind of notion without letting it run away with you so you become, in a sense, silly.

Hon. Mr. Ward: Could I just add that my experience in the past 10 months has been that, at least in terms of the education community, you seem to get much more criticism for too much change too quickly than for tardiness in responding to some of these initiatives. I just throw that out as being another perception that is clearly out there on the part of those charged with the responsibility of delivering education at the local level and within the classrooms. It is interesting that there are those two different perceptions.

Madam Chairman: That completes your line of questioning, Mr. Mahoney, for the moment, anyway?

Mr. Mahoney: Yes.

Madam Chairman: OK. Mr. Johnston.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I sense from the way this has been presented today that we are going through the estimates process, not dealing with the questions at hand, and maybe because of that I will respond with a statement as the critic for the official opposition and then ask my questions afterwards.

I was really disappointed in your presentation. I hate to say this, but you could have been Bette Stephenson in the kind of line you took on this, especially your conservative notions: "Let's take time; let's do pilot projects," without knowing what the philosophical underpinnings are for them, even though you want to praise us for looking at philosophical underpinnings first before we do anything else.

1450

I just have to say that when you start listing all the things you have done for the primary level of education, as you decided you wanted to do as part of your approach to this this afternoon, you did not mention and get on the public record, as I know you wanted to, that you are spending much, much less than you promised you would in the election; everything that you promised in the election you are doing by halves and thirds. I know you would have wanted that to get on the record because you have decided not to deal so much with philosophy and what your philosophical beliefs are and where the system should go,

but more in terms of what your government has accomplished or not accomplished.

I am surprised you did not mention your computer expansion, that wonderful announcement from a couple of days ago which will have such an important impact on the educational process in Ontario. I am sure you will want to do that as a supplementary response.

I just have to say that you have not dealt, as I hoped you would deal, with some of the fundamental questions that we have to face around the philosophical underpinnings and where we are going in the future. It makes me wonder, in fact, what you think the role of this committee is and maybe what the government now thinks the role of this committee is. Are we being stuck out here to be seen to be dealing with all the issues that you do not want to deal with in a holistic way, to deflect attention from what you are not doing; but you will do whatever you want anyhow, pilot projects and other things as we go along, and are we in fact an irrelevant process to what you are going to do?

Why have you not made any major comments about the goals you have laid down? You have talked about a sort of ying-yang approach of the poles to the individual self-actualization of students versus the economic-social goals, as you put it; but you never said where you stand on this, except that you are worried about us swinging too far on a pendulum, as Bette Stephenson probably would have said a while back. You have given us no notion at all of what the government's philosophical premises are here.

I find it difficult to understand why you have not made some comment upon the exclusionary nature of our public school system in terms of certain groups in our society who have not been able to benefit by it, as other groups have. I am surprised you have not talked a little bit about that, which we have been faced with, that you have a list of 13 goals you lay out for the individual development of kids and we have some notion now of incorporating kids with different levels of ability, in terms of their physical capacities or learning abilities and disabilities, but we have said nothing in our goals and statements about what we are doing for kids who are disadvantaged by economic factors in their lives.

There is nothing said at all in terms of our goals about how it is that you try to equalize things in real terms for a kid who comes hungry to school and cannot pay attention because of that, or who does not want to buy a gym suit because his

parents cannot afford that gym suit and therefore he gets excluded from the system.

Yet we have these wonderful goals which sound great for any average, middle-class kid but have made no difference over the last decades for poor kids; I just find it strange you do not talk about that. We have had the Metis association here, we have had the chiefs of Ontario in here, and you know what the statistics are in terms of native kids in this province and how the education system, on reserve and off reserve, has served them; yet you have made no comments at all about the philosophical underpinnings which have excluded that community for all these years.

Instead of just giving us a list of your pilot projects and various little initiatives that are being done here or there, you have said nothing about what we have to deal with, which is why are those kids excluded. Why is it that franco-phone kids in this province have a much lower chance of getting to a post-secondary institution than an anglophone child does? What are the problems in the way we have set up the system that have excluded them?

I am kind of disappointed that you have not touched on that. In my view, this debate that is out there at the moment that people seem to be focusing on between, sort of the individual self-actualization and the social goals, as it has been put, is a false dichotomy. What it really is is a notion of what the economy wants from them, what business wants, what capital wants—and it is fairly grossly expressed by some people—and the individual growth of a child.

We are leaving out of this whole thing the other social context. You do not deal with that. You have not talked here today, for instance, about the multicultural community very much—which I am kind of surprised about—and where your programs around racism and things like that fit into this whole mix of the philosophical underpinnings of what we want our society to do. You talk anecdotally about this or that; but you do not say, for instance, what you think the role of the community school is in this province any more, what you think the bases are for the accountability and the involvement of parents, instead of laying on parents, as you did, this notion that they want to put on to the school system all their problems and say they want the school system to solve them, which I do not buy for a second.

I think parents are just as responsible now about their kids as they were 20 or 30 years ago, but there is a realization that our society is

changing and therefore the role of the school must change. I do not think that is a sloughing off of responsibility, but we understand that is happening. What are your philosophical premises about the role of the community school and the role of the parents in decision-making in the school system? I did not hear anything about that in terms of philosophical context.

Can you talk a little bit today about this increasing role of business in the schools? I do not mean the co-op programs and things like those, which I would be in favour of. I am talking about the ethics, the ethos of entrepreneurship. We hear the language that comes out in your throne speeches and all of the other kinds of things that we hear from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business on that kind of notion.

One person from an industrial advisory council said to us the other day that there was no reason to talk about power relationships or the fact that a lot of these early school-leaving kids who are getting involved in their programs might really want to know a little bit about unions and things like that, because they are going into small business and did not need to know, they were non-unionized shops and therefore they did not have to know about the social context they were going out to. Instead, we develop this myth that everybody can be a millionaire, that we can all be small businessmen servicing each other and there is no actual worker in society who does anything.

I am not suggesting that we are going to get a socialist notion out there into our education system, but I find we have a fairly sophisticated blend of capitalism and socialism in our country. I am seeing a real trend away from any kind of notions of rights and powers—the beauty of the blue collar, as it was enunciated by one of the people who was before us today in terms of our value system—instead of this whole notion of the fostering of entrepreneurship, often very narrowly defined rather than progressively defined.

I did not hear you talk in philosophical terms about where the education process should be starting. What is early childhood education's role in your ministry? Do you buy what Radwanski is saying about the grade 3 starts? What kind of role do you see that taking? It would be a major philosophical shift in education in this province if we decide to move to earlier entrance. If we move to earlier entrance—and I did not hear you talk about this a great deal, although you alluded to a couple of working papers on this—where do we mix our philosophies of pedagogy that are out there at the moment?

There is a very different approach to how you teach a child in our day care system at this point and their notions of how you educate, with how we teach in the public schools in the elementary panel, especially the later half of the elementary panel, and then another whole pedagogical approach in the high schools, which I do not want to go into in detail here but we have been through it with our witnesses. I have not heard anything from you in terms of the presumptions of that pedagogy in terms of where you see things going in terms of, again, those underpinnings. I would have hoped we would have heard a little bit more about that from you today.

What I want you to do is to respond instead on that kind of a basis and not on a listing of your programs and projects. If we are here starting at the base and trying to say, "Where do we go?" what do you think about the goals of education that you have listed, the 13 that were done in some hotel room some place as we learned just the other day; a group of fairly proficient writers from the bureaucracy putting together an interesting list of 13 points of view? What do you see as what is missing in those goals? What do you see that we should be looking at to add to it?

That is the kind of response I had hoped for today and not just another listing of all the good things the government of Ontario has brought us. Because if that is the case, why do we not fold up our tents and you can go ahead continuing to announce your programs and we can just meet on estimates and debate whether they are good or not.

1500

If we have a real role as a select committee on education to look at the education system in some large way, we need to know where you stand on things in terms of where we are at the moment, the basic premises and what you think is useful for us to be dealing with or not dealing with. If we are here to be your patsies, quite frankly Mr. Cooke and I do not want to be on this committee; but if we are here to be doing work that you think is useful for a legislative committee to be doing, then let's hear about it.

My presumption, from hearing your announcement today, is: "It's great for you guys to be sitting here discussing these premises. We are off doing all these things, making assumptions about our premises right now." If that is the plan, what do you see as the role of this committee?

Hon. Mr. Ward: Thank you very much.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: For that short question.

Hon. Mr. Ward: I am very interested in your observations. I cannot help but note a certain

inconsistency in some of your remarks with much of what you have been saying over the course of the past year or so.

Clearly, your opening observation that your preference would be that I appear before this committee and make its recommendations and enunciate in what direction the ministry believes we have to take the system in all of its many varied facets, to me would be a total slight against what I see as being a very rare and valuable opportunity to bring together those mixtures that you talked about, those conflicts of philosophy.

On the one hand, you seem to be arguing strenuously for the preservation of the status quo and being highly critical of the recent initiatives that relate to trying to make secondary education more relevant and to build better bridges between the school and the workplace.

I hear you making a philosophical argument on the incursion of those kinds of initiatives into the system, when clearly I, for one, believe that in many ways the system as it is serves very poorly those students who need help the most. The working-class kids and the kids from the disadvantaged communities in this province are the ones who end up leaving the system in far greater numbers than anyone else.

I think there has to be a fundamental shift, but I am not going to sit here being the sole repository of all of the waste—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It's your opinions I want.

Hon. Mr. Ward: I have been very free with my opinions over the course of the past several months, and I will continue to operate in that fashion. But frankly, I think it would be totally inappropriate for me to come here and say: "This is what the committee should decide. These should be your conclusions." I had that choice.

Obviously, the assumptions are that there is a clear need for ongoing renewal within our system in that it is not serving the needs of all the students within it. The choices that have to be made have to be made in a constructive fashion and in a way that does not do more harm. In fact, over the course of the past decade or so we have seen so many instances of arbitrary decisions floating down from the upper floors of the Mowat Block to totally revamp the system and work everything all around. I just do not think that is the way of reform.

Mr. Jackson: What are you talking about? Those initiatives on assessment? Which of those that percolate down are you talking about?

Hon. Mr. Ward: I think those initiatives have all been well considered and appropriate.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Which one of the assessment bills?

Mr. Jackson: Nothing's really changed.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Let me put it another way, then. You did not enunciate before, in your opening statement, what you have just said about it not serving that community. Do you think, when we look at goals for the system, that we should be enunciating something in that area? Again, I am not here to do what—

Hon. Mr. Ward: I am not at all sure that the problem lies just in the goals.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Of course not.

Hon. Mr. Ward: I do think all of those ills that you list are the direct outcome of the goals. I do not think my sitting in my office writing up another 13-point list is any better than the 13-point list developed, as you say, in a hotel room. Frankly, I think our difference of opinion may not be in terms of what we should be doing; it may be your comfort level as to how you would like to see someone put forward the specific suggestions, whether it be do you buy everything George Radwanski says? My answer to that is no. Do you buy everything Ken Dryden says? Does one person have the answers to all of these problems? The answer clearly is no.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: But I will not buy anything that Chris Ward says, either, as far as that goes. You are now saying—it is part of a line that came through; maybe Mr. Mahoney said it or somebody else—that the goals are fine; it is just the implementation.

My sense is that the goals are not fine. I will give you an example. When we changed the goals of education, the very specific terms under that Education Act, with Bill 82, we for the first time started to make some inroads into the integration of a certain group of disadvantaged people in our society into the system. That was a goal that changed and, as a result of that we saw that the mechanism for implementation was different.

One of the disadvantaged groups we have not brought into the system, as you admit we have not and I am asserting we have not, is the families of the poor. I am saying, do we need a set of goals that specifically says that to equalize things and to allow those 13 other goals to happen you have to do something else beforehand, that presumes that you have to do something differently for kids from economically disadvantaged families?

Hon. Mr. Ward: But do you really believe that the goals as they are, or the goals in themselves, are what caused the problems, or are they the things that can solve the problems?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: But why do you want us even to deal with them?

Hon. Mr. Ward: To find solutions.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Why should we even discuss those things today in the underlying philosophy if we do not think it makes a good base upon which you then develop your mechanisms? Surely that is what we are trying to discuss.

Mr. Jackson: On what basis are you making decisions?

Hon. Mr. Ward: We are making decisions on the—

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Ward: Oh, hardly. That is—

Mr. Jackson: Or, as Dr. Shapiro says, when two groups come in, you can cancel out the needs based on the fact that you have two opposing views. I was very disturbed by that news.

Hon. Mr. Ward: I think Dr. Shapiro clearly qualified his statement.

Mr. Jackson: Yes. He was talking about government studies, probably his own.

Hon. Mr. Ward: In that regard, certainly you would be the expert on government by poll. I notice that Mr. Johnston is doing that as well.

Mr. Jackson: Yes, and we are not in power any more. We still have a problem in education. That is what we are here for.

Hon. Mr. Ward: I think we can get off that topic. Clearly, over the course of the past three years, the government has shown that its commitment is to excellence in education, that its concern has been the extent to which our elementary and secondary schools are equipping our children to survive and prosper once they leave the system, and that has been there for all to see and to be judged. Dr. Shapiro, did you want to add to that?

Dr. Shapiro: I just want to say something about at least what I consider to be some of the issues you have raised, the way I try to think of them, at least, in terms of the ministry. I do have a notion of what the function of schools is, and I see it rather differently, I have to say, for the elementary school than I do for the secondary school, although I hope they are complementary.

I really see the essential function of the elementary school as being a question of the development of whatever it is one calls the basic

skills. It is easy to say that that just means the three Rs, and obviously it needs to be more complexly thought through than that. At the very least, it needs to deal with more complex cognitive problems.

On the one hand, there is the development of basic skills. The other part of it would be the development of character, and that is what I see as a basic function of the elementary school. I see the school as the instrument, as one of the instruments, probably the main one, that society uses for the socialization of its young. The purpose, the focus of that socialization, for me, in the elementary school focuses both on character and on skill development, the former being a great deal more difficult to deal with than the latter, not only because there are such huge differences of opinion about either what character is or what character is not, the kind of character we are trying to produce, but also because the method of doing so is so difficult, so intractable to deal with. That is no reason to give up the goal; that is just a reason to keep at it and see how one proceeds.

1510

At the elementary school, that is the kind of focus I think we would like to focus on. At the secondary school, it is quite different. It is not that you give up skills and give up character; it is that the focus shifts. I regard the function of the secondary schools as essentially related to the transition to adult life.

I think what one has to keep in mind here is that transition for most people is not to a post-secondary institution. That transition, for most people, is to the world of work, however defined: in the home, out of the home, whatever. It is outside school; it is in some kind of work environment. For two thirds of the students who go to school in Ontario, that is what it is. Only one third will access any of the post-secondary institutions Ontario currently has.

In trying to think about that—and I will get to the criteria in a minute—and what the role of the school is, I think another issue comes to play a part, that is, it is at least impossible for me to imagine, in principle, a set of institutions, like schools, that will uniformly serve everyone adequately.

What is disturbing about the current situation is that some of the ways in which the groupings break down are not what we would like. It might be all right to say schools might not serve everyone as well as we would like, but it should not be just the poor or just the rich, or just the black or just the white, just the English or just the

French; those divisions have to be paid attention to.

But I think that as we think about the secondary school, in terms of its goal of transition to adult life, we have to think not only of whether students complete the secondary program, which is one kind of objective, but also of what is in place in the way in which society receives those young people, whether they leave school after graduation or in some cases—hopefully, fewer and fewer—before.

Part of the model we hope to be able to build up over time represents not only the attempt to keep people in school—on criteria that I will get to in a minute—but also to say if, for whatever reason, school is not working out, given whatever efforts are made, what else, what other range of social programs might be available to help young people make that transition.

When I put it that way, as between elementary and secondary school, I do not want to suggest that those institutions have responsibilities only for people who are 18 years old or younger, because another goal of the system clearly ought to be—and in this case it is not a monopoly goal, but it is at least an appropriate goal—to respond to people who require something new when they are adults.

The easiest example I can think of is in a school I was just at in Scarborough, as a matter of fact, in which I met a gentleman from the General Motors plant in Oshawa, who in recognition of my visit gave me a marvellous hat. Perhaps I should have worn the hat today, I am not sure.

Anyway, what they were trying to do was face a problem of layoffs in the General Motors plant: a group of workers who had not completed high school and were therefore not eligible for certain kinds of training programs. They were looking for someone to fill the gap. How do we get these people through high school? Both the difficulty and eventual triumph of the system was that they had a hard time finding a place but, when they found it, it worked perfectly.

Part of the goal we have to move towards is to make that easier to find. Whether the high school or some other institution is the answer is another question altogether. We need not think in terms of monopolies, at least not all the time.

In terms of the kinds of criteria that we try to use then to assess whether any new idea or new program will be helpful to the system in advancing us in these goals, as opposed to not helpful, the ones I try to use are the following. I will just list them; I have four and I will say a brief word about each of them. First is what I

would call achievement, second is diversity, third is accessibility and fourth is relevance.

By achievement, I simply mean: Is the new way of doing things, if there is to be a new way, likely to increase the degree to which an objective is achieved? It might be a cognitive or a learning objective, which is what a school's essential function is, or it might be some other kind of objective. Is it likely to increase the learning of young people?

By diversity, I am simply referring to the differences between individual students. I guess Bill 82 is one obvious example. Is the new way of doing it, if there is to be a new way, likely to respond more adequately to the differences between individuals? Bill 82 has very spectacular differences between individuals, but there are many more minor differences between individuals that need to be paid attention to, and of course, the differences that you yourself mentioned that do not have to do with cognitive skill but have to do with background of one kind or another.

In this particular area, diversity very quickly becomes what I call accessibility, which just refers to groups as opposed to individuals. Are various groups of people more likely to access the full range of the system than they were in the past?

I think, in that context, the schools are under enormous strain at the moment. The system as it was originally designed was not designed for a society nearly so heterogeneous as the society we are currently in. The schools, I believe, are responding to that. One of the problems of 20th century life is that institutions simply do not respond as quickly as life changes, so there is always this lag you are trying desperately to catch up on.

The way I would put it, if we were talking about teacher education, which is yet another topic, is to say that the unresolved problem for professional educators is not so much, how do you help young people learn, although that is not a totally resolved problem either, but what is your role as a constituency builder in your local area? That should be a goal for every single school and every single school district. It turns out, especially in large urban communities, that the mechanism originally designed for that, which is, after all, the election of the school board trustees—that is the way communities can make themselves felt—is not always fully sufficient because there is so much difference within communities.

Although it may be disturbing to think that various pieces of advice always cancel themselves out, in fact they do, and in the end, that is why you have to have criteria and goals that you believe in as something to help you on and help you make something out of that advice and help you help other people understand why one is doing one thing rather than another.

Finally, there is the question of relevance. This is, I think, another way of getting back to what I characterize as the character skills goals for schools. When I talk about relevance as a goal for the school, I am talking about it from the point of view of the student. There are lots of ways in which you can think about relevance, but the way I think about it in trying to work with my colleagues at the ministry is from the point of view of the student.

From my point of view, the goal is how we make the school experience seem relevant to the student from three points of view: The individual student must see it as relevant to his future as a worker, his future as a citizen in terms of his social responsibilities in a democracy and his future simply as an individual human being choosing to live a life of one kind as opposed to another kind. It is not sufficient for it to seem relevant to us, because we are not the ones who have to be motivated to learn—we have either passed that stage or perhaps got beyond it or whatever; or are hopeless cases, one or the other—but it must seem relevant to them.

That does put a particular burden, I would say, on the way in which we come to learn how to deal with the newer members of Ontario society, the newer groups inside Ontario. For example, just this week I have been dealing with our race relations people on a set of curriculum modules that was originally begun by the Hamilton board of education and the Ontario Human Rights Commission. They have run out of resources, and we have agreed to fill the gap and create those units.

1520

We need to do more of those kinds of things. I was heartened to note those kinds of issues, at least in my last meeting with the deans of the faculties of education; the various kinds of issues, not only multicultural and race relations and women's issues, all of which are currently chic—there is a danger we will all be terribly chic all of the time—but also the relationships that come up between people who are simply poor and people who are richer and therefore have a different way of accessing the system. I think in

fairness we have to say that there is a distance to go in this area.

My own view about it relates to something that came up in another session earlier in this committee's meetings. That had to do with whether or not the school is the right place for vocational skills. I think we have to remember that the traditional notion of vocational education as a possible goal of schools is now hopeless because what it was used as—and I think very well intended in a sense—was a way of dealing with people who could not cope with the more complex curriculum or the cognitive curriculum. The nature of work has changed, so that makes that hopeless now. Work has become very complicated.

The problem is to raise everybody's skills and not relegate one person to one group and one to another. In order to do that, we are going to have to develop the goals we have for the schools much, much, much stronger and more widespread—I would not say so much stronger as more widespread—in relationships both with labour and the business community because the schools simply cannot do it by themselves. It simply is not imaginable, at least from my point of view.

But I think, as we try to pursue those efforts further, we have to keep in mind that the goal is not to have one group of people who know something and another group of people who can do something. That is not an appropriate goal for the future of Ontario schools. There is no reason, in my view, why every young person in Ontario cannot both know something and do something.

It seems to me, for example, that an appropriate goal for the secondary schools—part of my notion, at least, of that institution as a transitional institution—might be for every student to leave it with at least one vocational skill. It is not crucial whether that skill is actually practised in real life, but the point is you simply do not learn in the abstract.

You do not learn how to think critically by saying, "Let's sit down and think critically," just as you do not learn how to develop character by saying, "This is the period in which we all learn how to be honest, loyal and true." You have to live those kinds of experiences inside, in this case a school, or it might be in a family, a church or another part of the socialization experience. So in that context, it is that kind of a way that I consider at least to be what you might call immediately, in a nonreligious context, an ecumenical view of the function of schools is best realized.

I regard the whole problem, in some sense, as existential, as I have said on other occasions, in that I do not expect that the Ministry of Education in this decade, or the next or the one after or the one after that, under whichever government, will resolve these issues. What we can hope for is we will keep our eye on the goal and be further advanced.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is that kind of enunciation which I was looking for, and I am pleased to have it. What I like about your four groupings is that they are a nice mix of individual and collective goals, and that is quite helpful.

Mr. Jackson: Minister, I think within the first couple of weeks of your term, you made some statements in the Hamilton-Wentworth area, the result of which was a question put to me about whether or not your resignation should be sought. I said no, which surprised everyone. I said, knowing you personally and politically as I have done for many, many years, that it was an unreasonable expectation that early in your tenure as the minister.

You have now been the minister for some nine months. You are the chief spokesperson for almost two million children and young adults in this province who are educated in some form. I guess my first question to you now, having been the minister for this period of time, is: In your mind, what is the number one problem in education in Ontario today?

Hon. Mr. Ward: If I had to isolate one particular issue that causes me the greatest concern, and it certainly comes back to the exchanges that we have just had over the course of the past hour or so, the concern that I have is just how well the system serves the 75 per cent of the students who go through and leave the system and graduate from it without pursuing a post-secondary education. I have concern about the extent to which the system serves those students who are making the transition directly from school to the world of work. I am not at all satisfied that we do serve the needs of those kids whose formal education ends with high school.

Mr. Jackson: In regard to the documents that we were presented by your ministry, one document, the Hope commission report, is now almost 40 years old and *The Goals of Education*, if I can date it, I believe is 30 years old.

You are aware of the goals of education and you are aware of the aims in education, which I will address in some of my specific questions. My question to you is, can you tell us what your personal philosophy is in terms of education in this province? What should we be doing in terms

of education in this province? What should we aspire to as a province?

Hon. Mr. Ward: I believe that clearly we should aspire to making our secondary system much more relevant. I think over the course of the past several years, we have seen a great deal of movement in that regard. Many of the initiatives that have recently been undertaken go some distance in achieving that goal of greater relevance but, clearly, it has to be a systematic kind of change.

Mr. Jackson: You are dealing with process. I am trying to get to goals, to stay with goals and philosophy, which is what this committee has spent the last two weeks on. I could talk about pooling and funding and a whole bunch of things but I want to just talk about goals. When you say relevance, relevant to what? The secondary school outcomes relevant to what?

Hon. Mr. Ward: Relevant to the world outside of school.

Mr. Jackson: What is the world outside? How do you tie that back into your goals?

Hon. Mr. Ward: I guess the greatest concern that I have is how well our students fare in comparison to the students in the schools in other economically developed countries. The indications are that in this country and in this province we have some distance to go in terms of equipping our secondary school students. Clearly, our graduates of our post-secondary institutions are right up there with all of our present and future industrial competitors, but—

Mr. Jackson: How then do you reconcile, Minister, the fact that other jurisdictions in the world come to Ontario with a certain degree of envy of the type of individual and the type of society that we are producing? Now you are talking about outcomes—

Hon. Mr. Ward: In some respects, Cam, that is fair but not in every one.

Mr. Jackson: I mean even the Japanese—it is ironic. We are looking from the west to the east, if you read the Premier's Council report, with a degree of admiration and emulation. They are standing on an eastern shore looking west and saying how fortunate or, as one group of Japanese was quoted as stating, our system was like splendid chaos. It was vibrant, it was working, it was self-actualizing.

You have answered your philosophical—you have given us a greater insight in terms of where the emphases are secondary, and outcomes relative to the world of work. That is basically what Radwanski said.

1530

Hon. Mr. Ward: Certainly, and perhaps oversimplified. I think if you look at some of the deliberations—

Mr. Jackson: That is exactly what Dryden said as well, but there are two different approaches.

Hon. Mr. Ward: Mr. Jackson, take a look at the report of the Premier's Council, which I think even you would concede is a very extensive exercise, not just to put in place the opinions of leaders in government, but also a very real and genuine attempt to draw in as broad a cross-section as possible of the expertise and talent that is available in this province, to do some sort of analysis of where we are heading or where we want to head and how we are going to get there.

It clearly points to some rather serious potential deficiencies unless we make some adjustments and changes. Look at the enrolment at our community colleges in technical kinds of endeavours. Within the next two or three years, this province is going to have to recruit offshore many more of its technologists than it does today. I do not think that is healthy or appropriate.

Mr. Jackson: We are going to get into Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions and your ministry, through you, will speak to the issues of that, but I want to stay with philosophy and goals; otherwise we have wasted two weeks here.

One of the principles that Dr. Shapiro has enunciated and that I indicated was an area I felt we should be examining, because it has not been examined in this province, and it should be done in a public forum, is the concept of access. Whom do we educate in this province? My next question to you is, in your mind, whom are we, as a government, obligated to serve in terms of education in this province? I think you know what my question is about.

Hon. Mr. Ward: Surely we are obligated to serve each and every child in this province, and yes, I think I know what your question is about.

Mr. Jackson: I will come right to the point. If we, as a province and as a people, are committed to the notion of accessibility, whether as Mr. Johnston has enunciated it, it is access for the poor, for equal opportunities through the school system, or it could be more obvious, as we have heard from the Ontario Association of Alternative and Independent Schools, or it could be those children who are not receiving sufficient integration which is the socialization aspect of a school experience that they are being denied,

then we need to have a statement in our goals and philosophy that becomes our benchmark, our guide, our sense of vision about what we believe in the system. Then we come to you or to this government to implement that.

To put it another way, if we are not prepared to acknowledge and therefore react and develop those commitments, why are we stating them as commitments? I may as well give you the final point that concerns me. Why are we inviting groups that do not have access to the educational system in this province to a charade and a dance where we are not even going to do anything for them? I consider that process somewhat cruel.

Hon. Mr. Ward: I believe that everything we have done over the past many years in education has very clearly been pointed to enhancing and providing access, whether it be the special education initiatives of a few years ago, whether it be our endeavours over the course of the past few years to ensure that French-speaking Canadians in this province have an opportunity to develop fully an educational system that the Charter of Rights guarantees for them—

Mr. Jackson: In fairness, you have good examples. There is no problem with that.

Hon. Mr. Ward: —or whether it be through the establishment of a race relations policy, an initiative that is fairly recent, but which is long overdue. Each and every one of these has been an attempt to reach out and to better serve and draw into the system—

Mr. Jackson: All right. But there are clear examples, minister, where we draw a line in Ontario.

Hon. Mr. Ward: There is also an issue of choice. If it is your suggestion that in fact there should be a wide spectrum of alternative opportunities for education, fully funded by the province, I am sure that—

Mr. Jackson: No, Minister. So that you understand my question clearly, we are going to be doing this process for the next three years. OK? Radwanski gave you good counsel, that you should focus on outcomes as much as you do on process. As Mr. Johnston has quite clearly indicated, we are not prepared to sit here if the process leads to no outcomes. Why should we be inviting groups to this table that are not involved in any of the outcomes?

I read in today's paper the Premier (Mr. Peterson) saying that there is absolutely nothing, that we are going to be doing nothing with respect to private school funding. It is fine for him to say that. Given the initiatives within the ministry, the

report of the deputy minister, who is even here, there is a tremendous amount of expectation out there. It is founded, we believe, not only on political statements, but also in the philosophy of this province with respect to equal rights and with respect to access.

What I am saying is, why are we wasting their time coming here if that decision is made? I am not putting a value on the decision. I am simply saying let's state it so that we can hear from the other groups where our goals and philosophies really lie. They are a group on the outside looking in. That is the example of private schools.

We heard very cogent arguments from the Canadian—

Hon. Mr. Ward: They are a group with full access to—

Mr. Jackson: Let me finish, Minister.

Hon. Mr. Ward: —the publicly funded system as well.

Mr. Jackson: Read today's article in the Toronto Star by Sandro Contenta. It is certainly refreshing for this committee to be able to get that information from the Star. My point is that this is an example of groups on the outside in this province looking in, in terms of what we, as a province, believe people have in terms of access to education.

There are other groups that are within who are pleading before this committee that the goals of education do not mirror their experience, not even marginally whatsoever. Again, if you say that you have been watching these proceedings, that they have been reported to you, then you will be aware of the Metis and aboriginal concerns that have been expressed here, the most serious problem of dropouts in this entire province. They brought that to our attention. We gave them \$35,000 to do a study for the entire province. You cannot hire a person for that. None of your personal staff is making less than \$35,000, but we expect them to do an account and give this government the necessary proof.

Hon. Mr. Ward: You had better not tell them that.

Mr. Jackson: I am not going to get into salaries, limousines or Blue Jay games today; I promise.

Mr. Mahoney: That is a relief.

Mr. Jackson: But there are other groups. For example, you have a 40-year-old document here on the aims of education that says that Ontario promote, that the aim of education is, "To develop the concept that education is a continuing process beyond the school." Now, our job is

to analyse whether or not that is what we believe in, whether we are committed to it and have funded, created a dynamic and supported it, and allowed it to happen.

Hon. Mr. Ward: And if it is being achieved.

Mr. Jackson: Even if it is being achieved, there are a lot of things we believe in and we are not getting even near to them. We know there has been a lot of measurement in terms of achievement, but is this a concept or is it a commitment? We have heard from the Ontario Association for Continuing Education. We have a report that has been sitting there that is awaiting your response. It is called Educating Adults.

Are we to take sufficient time to deal with those issues if the goals of education in this province are particularly articulated so that they exclude adult and continuing education? We need to hear from you, as the representative of your government, where the philosophy in education is now in your own mind on that subject and where you think we should be going.

I will go back to the decision on private school funding. If the Premier's decision is, "We are not getting into it," then tell us, so we do not spend a lot of time on that because this committee has the widest mandate of any committee I have ever seen.

1540

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Who wrote the terms of reference?

Mr. Jackson: I am starting to feel guilty for demanding that we deal with goals and philosophy first. I thought it was about time we paused and reflected on it.

The second example you have here, to give you a third and final example from the aims of education, which is 40-year-old document, is, "To develop competence for a suitable occupation." I am quite offended by that statement when I analyse it, given the problems in our schools in terms of sexism, gender distinction and also the preordination of some children in our schools in terms of where their life choices will lie. I think we have so far to go in that area, just for young women who are growing up in this province, yet I am looking at an aim like that.

Is it your understanding that this committee should be making specific recommendations with respect to throwing out some outdated goals that are no longer relevant because they were written 40 years ago and to revise them in terms of equal life choices and in terms of greater accessibility, specifically for the treatment of our Indians and our native heritage?

I will tell you amazing information came from them with respect to languages that will die from the face of this earth in this province, indigenous to this province. We are literally romancing the multicultural aspect of the changes in this province and we are going to sit by and watch a language and a culture die, which was our own. The only hope for that is the school system. Those were clearly passionate and articulate appeals to this committee because previous governments and this government, apparently, have not been listening. It has not worked. The goals are stated, but we do not have the actual experience to go with it.

I am prepared, as Mr. Johnston has indicated, to participate in a meaningful way, and I know the groups are, but we have to get a signal from you that this process does lead to some outcome, and if it does, we have to collectively, in a nonpartisan way, embrace it and move towards improvements.

I can tell you my major concerns. You get a sense of them in terms of sexism, in terms of equal opportunities, the fact that when children go out of the public system into a private school they lose all their speech therapy services in this province. They go out the door. They are denied. We are teaching children how to communicate, whether they are in a private school or a public school.

I could go on with lists, but they came from the process of the last two weeks. Many of us saw a lot more than we thought we would and we are moved to act. We need from you a clear indication that there will be a commitment that we can define some goals and philosophy which will allow your government, at least for the next three years, to move us in a more progressive way along that route.

I would like you to comment specifically about why we are inviting groups when it is clear the philosophy is that they are not part of the educational process in this province, whether they are children before the age of five, whether they are children of parents who have chosen to put them in private schools or whether they are dropouts from the 1970s and the early 1980s who are now looking to the school system to help educate them through adult and continuing education.

Hon. Mr. Ward: I might begin by saying from the very outset, I do think the committee's approach, beginning with the goals, is appropriate.

Now, in terms of my rebuttal, relative to Mr. Johnston's opening statement, the point I wanted

to make is that, frankly, I think in his soliloquy, to suggest that all society's ills or all of the system's shortcomings can be directly attributable to the goals that were enunciated some time ago I do not think is what he intended.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I do not think that is what he said.

Mr. Jackson: Why do you not answer my question? You had an hour with Mr. Johnston.

Hon. Mr. Ward: If you will let me, Mr. Jackson. If you will stop—

Mr. Jackson: Who has access to education in this province? That is what I was asking.

Hon. Mr. Ward: I am quite prepared to continue with a lengthy answer to a rather lengthy series of questions.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: You do that with answers to short questions too.

Hon. Mr. Ward: I do in fact believe that the committee's exercise is valuable. I think it is important that the committee examine and make determinations as to the extent to which the goals, as currently enunciated, are being met, and what sort of initiatives, what sort of changes, what sort of reforms are necessary in those instances when it is clear they are not meeting all the needs that exist out there.

You made some reference to the fact that you have had delegations before you that do not have access to the system or are not part of the system. Frankly, I totally reject that notion. I believe every delegation you have had before you to date has a vital interest in the system and does have access to the system. Certainly, there are those representing some groups who prefer something other than what is being offered and would like to see it provided with government funds. That is a valid point of view and one that clearly, over the course of time, will have to be considered.

I am surprised that it came as news to you that we do not provide funds for private and independent schools in this province. I was aware of that before the Toronto Star article and I think most people in this province were. It is true that we did not respond to the recommendations—

Mr. Jackson: I was referring to the fact that we have to read that the Premier was totally unaware that proposals were being formulated within your ministry. I did not want to bring up the issue of what you discussed at the cabinet table, because that is obviously not my area to be getting into, but it is obvious that a lot of issues are not getting to the cabinet table.

Hon. Mr. Ward: I would be happy to indicate to you that the government and this ministry have

made no determinations on the report of the Shapiro committee. It has yet to deal with the recommendations that are contained within that report.

You will recall that at the time the government of the day chose to undertake this very broad examination of the issue—I think it was back in 1983 or 1984—it also, at pretty much the same time or shortly thereafter, embarked on another major undertaking, that being the announcement of the completion of the separate school system.

I think it is fair to say that over the course of the past two or three years, a great deal of time and energy have gone into that particular exercise. In terms of the government's highest priorities, dealing with the recommendations of that report has not been at the top of the list. No doubt that comes as distressing news to some people, but frankly there is only so much that can be undertaken at any one time, and as yet we have not made a determination on those issues.

I think it is grossly unfair to suggest that the committee has wasted time by bringing those groups before it—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: We are wasting their time.

Hon. Mr. Ward: —when I think they have a very legitimate point of view and a very clear right to put forward that point of view before this committee.

Dr. Shapiro: I just want to suggest that the question of access, relative to adult and continuing education—that is only one of the issues you raised, but that particular one—is an important issue. I referred to it briefly in response to Mr. Johnston.

I do have to say that for the ministry the priority, when choices have to be made, is not for adult and continuing education, not because it is less important in some overall sense—which I think could not be a point of view I could support—but simply because education for young people is compulsory and therefore we must provide it.

Second, we are virtually the only provider for young people at that age, whereas in adult and continuing education we share the provision of those services with a number of other private and public institutions and firms, for that matter.

1550

That does not in any way take away from the need to try to be more imaginative and more responsive, because people at various ages need various things and because they are 43, 63 or 93 should not militate against their ability to access

help from the system. I would say we need to try to work through a better way of responding than we have, but that, nevertheless, in those difficult situations that occur from time to time when you have to make choices, our priority has generally been with the younger people simply because we are obligated to them and we are the only—not only; that is overstating it—virtually the only place in which they can have a response. Ideally, of course, we will not have to make those choices and hopefully we will make them less and less frequently in the future.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: This is a supposition on that. In places like Sweden, another mandate is accepted, and that is that there is not just the notion that you must teach your children but when the adults in Sweden request funding for education, it is a given, and they have had a whole tradition of that. That is a tradition we do not have a tradition of here, and I am wondering if that is not a principle that we should be looking at.

Hon. Mr. Ward: I think we have moved a great distance in the past little while in terms of continuing education, and we clearly do recognize that our educational system just does not cease at age 16 or 18 or when the kid leaves the system. I think that was clearly demonstrated when significant levels of funding were established a year or so ago.

The report on educating adults, I believe is an absolutely valuable resource and one we will be responding to, we hope in the very near future. To suggest that because we have been doing our own analyses of those recommendations over the course of the past few months, we will not be proceeding with further initiatives in continuing education is, I think, a most unfair suggestion, and clearly is not the case.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am just saying I am wondering whether, in our goals for education and the Ministry of Education, we should not be looking at some sort of notion of the right of adults to request education and be thinking in those terms as well. That might provide more of a mandate for you.

Mr. Jackson: We are not even getting the word “adult” into our philosophy. If we even got that far, that would be a major achievement for this committee.

Dr. Shapiro: I think it is only fair to point out that it is not a problem of access by adults to the regular program, which is easy and straightforward. The problem is, of course, access by adults to different kinds of programs, to programs that

are outside the normal offerings of the school, etc. I am not trying to say that is inappropriate. That is the problem. It is not the problem of access by adults who want to deal with a regular program.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: If the people in the school have to make the choice, they will still make it for the kid who is under 18 rather than putting on the adult program in a day school, on the same basis that you have just made your decision.

Hon. Mr. Ward: The current problem is the ability to deliver beyond that.

Mr. Beer: But part of the question here is, with respect to the goals, you can still have a set of goals; it may not be necessarily that the institution or the entity that is going to deliver some of those goals is always that same player. Your point, I would say, is very relevant in terms of defining the goals, but increasingly we are looking at different players. We have had that around literacy, and whether it is appropriate in terms of where that focus is, and that kind of thing.

Dr. Shapiro: There is one other point that I thought was interesting relative to change. Mr. Jackson suggested that while we were busy looking at Japan, they were busy looking at us, and he is right. I think that is a fair statement of what is happening, but I think that in fact is exactly how it should be. That is, what we should be doing is looking around to see who else has something to offer us. I do not think we have the slightest thing to be embarrassed about in terms of the achievement of the Ontario schools. We focus, naturally, on the failures because we want to know how we can do better, but I think our schools have accomplished miracles in situations and in circumstances that are not always very propitious.

What you want to do is look around and say, "Has someone else got an idea, and if so, how can we adapt it?" Maybe we cannot—maybe it is wrong; it is the wrong culture, the wrong history, the wrong set of circumstances, the wrong language, whatever—but maybe we can. I would hope that our activity would be characterized by more looking around, and that more people would look at us.

Madam Chairman: Just before we go on to the questioning, I would mention a point of clarification for Mr. Jackson. He made a comment in his preamble that the goals of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario were formulated almost 40 years ago, and he was not

sure about the current set, but he thought maybe 30 years ago. Our legislative researcher has confirmed that the 13 goals first appeared in the 1980 publication *Issues and Directions*, so I think it was the latter part of 1979 or early 1980 when they were formulated in that famous hotel room.

Mr. Jackson, do you have any other comments or questions before we go on to Mr. Keyes?

Mr. Jackson: I have a lot of questions, but in fairness, I will yield to another member. If time permits, I will continue.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. I appreciate that.

Mr. Keyes: Probably some of the most heart-rending and provocative presentations over the last two weeks were those made on behalf of young people with special needs, particularly the Down syndrome people, who were here in considerable numbers, and then the Alliance for Children—Ontario, which I thought was a phenomenal group. It was the first time I had occasion to meet with them, but they represented some 13 groups of young people with special needs, from those most severely handicapped, perhaps, to those of brilliance.

I am trying to frame it in the way of a philosophy, because that is what I have been trying to keep the committee steered towards this week. They raised a couple of issues, one of which is probably the greater one philosophically; that is, their request was almost the mandated role of parents in the education system.

While we may not have that, the general thing I look at as the whole philosophy is the extent to which the parents become much more officially engaged in the education process. I could talk at length about the difficulty we have always had to get parents involved—the ones that you want involved—in schools. Usually, you could find those of the children who were the average achievers and above. It was sometimes very difficult to get the others involved, for a variety of reasons—intimidation by the system of these people—which prompts us to say: "How can we involve parents? What role should the parents have?"

Then we expand upon that, because they were looking more specifically at their own children's needs. The one group very clearly wanted to see total integration of the child, regardless of the degree of difficulty. Then we came to the alliance. They took the more balanced approach that there should be the variety, that total integration for some was appropriate and segregation still was appropriate.

I want you and Dr. Shapiro just to talk a bit about the philosophy of the ministry with regard to all of those groups of special needs people. I think as we look at Dr. Shapiro's comments on the four criteria for measuring the success of a school system, every one of those four pertains very directly to these particular special interest groups. To what extent will that philosophy pervade the ministry as we look at special needs? Where do we bring parents more formally into the whole decision-making process about education?

Then you may want to touch on the integration-segregation balance, as well. It was not touched on in any of your four that you talked about in your opening remarks in this area.

Hon. Mr. Ward: Clearly, the philosophy of the ministry has been, in terms of the needs of special education students and those kids with special needs, that the system has to provide access, the system has to be able to accommodate any exceptional pupil, regardless of his or her exceptionality. Over the course of the past few months, I too have had an opportunity to meet with representatives of these groups, and there certainly is a diversity of opinion out there over the issue of full or partial integration of students with special needs into the school system.

1600

Clearly there is a diversity of points of view, all of which cannot possibly be accommodated. It is our intention to come forward with amendments to the Education Act relative to special education. Those amendments will be shared and circulated and there will be an appropriate opportunity for consultation, but I think it is fair to say that the ministry's point of view is one of balance between segregation and integration.

Mr. Keyes: They all did show, again, a great deal of support for ministry actions in regard to special education, Bill 82, etc.

I do not want to get into specifics, but one of the things that prompted a great deal of discussion, even by members of this committee as well as those, was the whole identification and placement review committee process, requests that "placement" be added to by "program."

I personally always felt that placement involved program—in my schools it certainly did, so that they knew what the program was going to be—but Mr. Johnston also referred to the fact that it was not an appealable sort of thing. As I say, I always felt with my students I placed, program had to be very much part of the placement. In fact, program was more important to me than

placement. Placement may have been a regular classroom teacher, but it was the program that was going to be provided that was most significant, and I had the good fortune in my years in it never to have had an appeal against any one of our IPRC decisions that was ever made.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Mahoney has a supplementary on that question, unless you are going on.

Mr. Keyes: Yes. I want to also then bring him back to the role of parents in general, but I will take the supplementary.

Mr. Mahoney: My supplementary is in the area of the IPRCs. The example was given of the parents called in for the interview with 27 professionals on one side of the table and mom and dad, if they are lucky—often just mom and perhaps just dad, but if they are lucky, mom and dad—on the other side of the table. I have been through it personally; I know how difficult it is.

Is there any indication that there might be, from a philosophical perspective, more direction from the ministry that would allow either the softening of that process or more involvement by the parent or the parent group, some way that there could be a lessening of the tension and the intimidation?

It is really unintentional on behalf of the professionals. I found them to be extremely competent in dealing with the case in my own family, but just the whole scenario really leaves you frightened, and for many people who perhaps do not have a background in education or are not quite sure what to do, I just find it very cumbersome.

Is there any opportunity or possibility that there might be some philosophical directions given or other policy directions given in this area that might help the parents?

Hon. Mr. Ward: Again, as I indicated in my response to Mr. Keyes, there has been a great deal of activity over the formulation of amendments related to special education. There has been a lot of dialogue and interaction with many interested groups. I expect that very early in the fall session we will put forward a list.

In answer to your question as it relates to whether or not a change in terms of the philosophic approach can erase some of the intimidation that is more part of a process that is put in place, and an elaborate process at that, I am not sure of the extent to which that can be altered merely by way of a change in philosophic direction.

Dr. Shapiro: I should say a couple of things. First of all, I think the position of the ministry

clearly is that integration for its own sake in every case is thoughtless and inappropriate. We should make every effort to try to put a child in as normal—so to speak—an environment and as interesting an environment as possible, and one that will most foster his or her own development, but to say in advance that is always integration is not our current view. Of course, there are more and more examples of integration, as you obviously know.

Mr. Mahoney: Is that a view that goes across the province from board to board?

Dr. Shapiro: Yes, we have been quite clear about that to the boards.

In the amendments that we are preparing for Bill 82, the trainable mentally retarded legislation, we are considering the question, because the current legislation really militates against integration as an option in that specific example. We will be bringing amendments forward in that area that should be of some help.

Relative to the environment of the IPRC, that is a really difficult problem. Although I cannot say I have experienced it as a parent, I can feel it. As you describe it, I can understand how it might be intimidating in some sense, and here we find ourselves caught by two opposing kinds of forces.

One is the one that says, let's try to humanize this process, bring it down to an appropriate scale so that the parent feels that this is a real interaction, it is not a situation of the profession, so to speak, leaning on the parent, who is relatively defenceless in the environment. As you point out, we could try to humanize, in a sense; make the process more informal, perhaps.

On the other hand, there is another force, and that is that since people are very concerned, and legitimately concerned, with their own rights in the process, the need for formality increases with the number of lawsuits which we face in those instances where it was not carefully observed.

So we have this kind of tension that exists. How do you bring it down to a more human interaction? At the same time, how do you stage it in such a way that when the court examines it, as it will from time to time—hopefully, not often—it stands up to reasonable canons of natural justice: People can explain; people can give reasons; people can point to evidence.

We will have to keep working on that, because I accept your description of it as a real problem as you experienced it and as other parents experience it as well.

Mr. Keyes: There is only one thing we might touch on there again. I was glad to hear Dr.

Shapiro talk about looking perhaps—this is related to another question I wanted to get in and maybe I am not going to have time—at trying to find a role for another entry into the advisory system for other aspects of our society. Certainly there was praise, again, for the special education advisory committee process. We are having them appear before us, I believe, in September, so that we can better appreciate what they are doing and their continuing role.

Can you make any comment at all on the parental involvement? Try to keep this at a more general level, not just special ed. It was made as a plea, as you know, by the home and school association, and the rest, to recognize, as we have said and everyone has said, that the parents have a much greater role. It is a very difficult one to deal with, but there is no reason why you should not be handed difficult issues.

Hon. Mr. Ward: I guess more by way of some personal observations, I think everything in terms of how our system of education is structured is done, in a way, to reflect the opportunity for input on the part of the community, on the part of families, on the part of parents. During my opening exchange with Mr. Johnston, I did make some reference to the fact that I find it disturbing that in so many instances the expectations continue to build that during the school day all of the needs of our children can and should be met.

Clearly there is no question that, as a result of societal changes, the fact that invariably both parents are out earning an income, the burden of responsibility has shifted to the schools and to the teachers, particularly at the elementary level. I think we would all concede that perhaps that is inevitable.

I do think, though, that there has to be a clear reiteration of our society's expectations that indeed parents do need to be more involved and do have to participate more actively in their child's education, assisting in remedial work at home and participating in school activities. Probably the last people you need to talk to about it are the home and school associations, because those are the very ones that have been involved.

1610

Mr. R. F. Johnston: They need some power.

Hon. Mr. Ward: Where do they get the power, Richard? You would think that they would get the power through the fact that the governance system is structured in such a way that at the most basic level it has that opportunity to, in terms of the directions—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I think the deputy's point of view on that was really accurate, about the smaller communities.

Hon. Mr. Ward: No, even from a governance point of view, it distresses me when you see only 30 per cent of the population participating in that exercise.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is because they feel powerless.

Hon. Mr. Ward: They should not feel powerless. I guess that is what it comes down to. You will recall that during the height of the accommodation difficulties in Hamilton-Wentworth—I will use this as an example—in one of the inner-city wards immediately adjacent to Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School there was a by-election and the voter turnout was 9 per cent. It is frightening.

Mr. Jackson: It was a municipal by-election.

Hon. Mr. Ward: It was a school board by-election as well, to fill a vacancy.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I did not mean to interrupt. I am sorry. I have had enough time anyhow.

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Ward: I do not know how we can get parents more involved. I really do not.

Mr. Keyes: All right, that is a very fair admission.

Hon. Mr. Ward: Maybe you can find a way.

Mr. Keyes: They talk about it, so I think there is an interest and an eagerness on the part of a fair number of parents to be part of it. A lot of the parents, the ones who want to meet, the ones Richard talks about, are low-income, some from poor housing, all those who are intimidated, frankly, by the system in their first experience with it. Therefore, they have a reluctance to come back near it. They do not want to experience failure a second time, with their children. We find that does happen by their not being involved. Maybe the challenge is if we cannot get them involved, we have to have more consideration to try to deal with those ones who are deprived in the system as a result and accept the fact that the generation afterwards may benefit.

Hon. Mr. Ward: We do it through structural changes, in terms of the system or not. I think we got even more away from the community and family involvement with the creation of larger school boards.

Mr. Keyes: Yes, very true.

Hon. Mr. Ward: Yet there are tradeoffs as well.

Mr. Keyes: I guess what we need to be looking at is how to involve more of the community in the process.

Madam Chairman: The Alliance for Children came out with, I thought, a perfect comment yesterday when it was talking about the involvement of parents and why they should be involved. I think it struck a chord with the members here, particularly those of us who are parents, when they said the parents are in there for the long haul, are in for the marathon and the professionals are in for the sprint. I think that summed up very well why we need their input. Now we have to decide how to do it.

Mr. Keyes: I do not want to be argumentative, but I, having been, one of the "professionals," do not agree that professionals are in there only for the sprint. That was a nice-sounding, attention-grabbing type of situation that I could have clobbered them for.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: With their children, with their individual children. They were not trying to denigrate the role of the professional. They were trying to say that for their kid that professional may be only involved for a year, two years or three years, but they were in for the long haul. I thought that was what they were trying to say.

Mr. Keyes: That is more acceptable, very good. You will pick up a few more votes in Oshawa with that one.

Madam Chairman: Sometimes the history of the child is available to the parent.

Mr. Furlong: A number of business associations appeared before the committee and were somewhat critical of the results of the system. We had the Retail Council of Canada, which indicated that the goal should be to prepare young people for their economic roles and responsibilities.

We had the Ontario Chamber of Commerce say that the schools should prepare graduates to be employable or easily trainable. We had the Canadian Federation of Independent Business say that we were creating couch potatoes. I wonder, should the system be delivering the results that these groups want, or are their expectations too high?

Hon. Mr. Ward: I do not think the system should be structured just to deliver exactly what those organizations want. When I take the opportunity to engage in some of those dialogues, and certainly I have done that over the course of the past several months, I think it is

always helpful to go out and get the input from the broader community rather than just from those directly involved in the delivery of education.

We have heard complaints about the extent to which kids who graduate can communicate, about their reading and writing skills, but sometimes I really wonder at the extent to which those kinds of criticisms do get overstated. Even Mr. Johnston's precise polling that he did among his constituents, I think, asked a question as to the quality of education compared to that which they, as parents, had experienced. Obviously, the answer came back quite clearly that their education was much better than that of their students.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Especially the longer ago it happened.

Hon. Mr. Ward: That is right. I think that is a natural tendency. It reminds me a little bit of Dizzy Dean's famous line, "The older we get, the better we was." Sometimes I wonder how much of that is purely a subjective observation and the extent to which it is real.

I do not want to dismiss it all, because I think there is a real concern out there. We have to clearly establish whether or not there is a shortcoming in terms of the basic skills that kids have when they leave the system, and we are endeavouring to do that. We are doing it through our review mechanisms and our assessments. I think, clearly, we have to be able to answer those kinds of criticisms, and I am not at all sure yet that we can.

Mr. Furlong: One of the groups, the Retail Council of Canada, indicated that it represents approximately one eighth of the labour force, and it is the entry level to a lot of students who go into the workforce.

This is the stuff that gets into the headlines. As these groups appeared here, the headlines were that the system was failing. I think the perception is that it is failing, because that is what people believe.

Hon. Mr. Ward: That is clearly the perception of those groups.

Mr. Furlong: But I think it goes further than that. You end up getting a problem and getting some generalizations about the system that are not necessarily correct.

We had the Ontario Federation of Labour, which took a different approach. They were more in line with the educators than they were with the business community. Is there a greater role for the business community, labour and the boards

of education? Can they do something that would help develop either a new goal or a system by which they will all be satisfied and the results will be productive?

Hon. Mr. Ward: I really do not know that they can solve their concerns just by enunciating a new goal, because frankly, I do not think that is what their concern relates to.

Mr. Furlong: But can they become part of the process? I get the feeling that they are not.

Hon. Mr. Ward: Definitely, they can become part of the process, and I think clearly they have been becoming more and more a part of the process. But there are also some great inconsistencies here as well. Mr. Johnston talked about our movement in the direction of the development of entrepreneurial skills and bringing in the advice and expertise of the business community, I think with some degree of concern that it, in fact, represented some sort of philosophic point of view. Quite frankly, I do not think it does.

1620

I think it adds to the balance. When I look at some of our experiences in co-operative education and some of the difficulties that we have had in terms of balancing the concerns of labour about those programs, it cuts both ways as well.

On the one hand, we have had some co-operation from business and some resistance on these kinds of initiatives and I can show many examples where boards have had great difficulty in establishing co-operative education programs because of resistance of organized labour over some quite legitimate concerns.

Surely there has to be some sort of comfort and some sort of recognition that the system is not out there to indoctrinate the kids, but is, in fact, trying to provide some balance, some sort of opportunity to develop some life experiences before they leave the system.

The deputy wanted to make a point as well.

Dr. Shapiro: I have just a couple of things. I think we have to make sure we phrase the question properly. The question, given the increasing complexity of the social environment and the economic environment in which we live, is not whether the standards have been maintained, but whether they are rising quickly enough. That is the question.

The second part of it is that we have been, unfortunately, in a situation where we have nothing to say to people who make those kinds of comments, primarily because the government has not been in a situation in which it has information about the achievement level of the

young people who are at various levels of the school system.

So the conversation tends to degenerate into the dialogue of the deaf. "Yes, they do achieve." "No, they don't." "Yes, they do." "No, they don't." Whoever stops first, stops first, but that does not really go anywhere. We are hoping the provincial review system that we are beginning to put into place will help, at least, to enable that conversation to go on a more productive level, so we can see what the issues are and where, if anywhere, there needs to be improvement and focus on those kinds of concerns.

Finally, on the question of entrepreneurship, I think that it is really important and I do not know that we have always succeeded—we have certainly tried and will attempt to in the future—not to define entrepreneurship in terms of business, small or big.

That is just one version of a kind of behaviour that might be called entrepreneurial. What we are interested in is lively young people interested in knowing about their environment, assessing how they want to act in it and being able to take the risks to do so.

Whether that is inside a labour union or on a factory floor or in someone's own business, it is simply another matter all together. So that, when we think of entrepreneurship, we really are trying to think of a much more generic kind of behaviour.

Maybe initiative would be a better word to use, because I do understand the overtones of the word. I accept that as a real problem.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: When the members of the Kingston Area School to Employment Council came before us they basically were saying that notion of leadership in a union, for instance, was irrelevant to those kids altogether, because they work in small business that is not unionized.

Dr. Shapiro: I accept that as a problem, but that is what we—we do not look at it that way and we are not going to prepare our materials on that ground.

How that gets operationalized and what we have to do about it after that remains to be seen.

Mr. Beer: I would like to focus on the relationship between the goals that we are trying to evolve and develop, and the teacher. I take as my text, a comment our colleague the member for Kingston and The Islands (Mr. Keyes) made when we were chatting before the session began this afternoon. I hope he does not mind if I repeat the story, because I think it is a good one to make a point.

He noted that a few short years ago, when he began teaching, he was thrust into a classroom on Wolfe Island without an iota of instruction in terms of how to be a teacher. There he was in a one-room schoolhouse. He has kept in touch with everyone from that schoolhouse and they have all done very well. We were not quite sure whether that was because of, or despite, the efforts that he made.

Mr. Keyes: Despite.

Mr. Beer: I think that so often—and perhaps it relates to the questionnaire Mr. Johnston had—when people look back at their experience in school, we go back to the relationship we had with a particular teacher. We often do not remember the course. There are a lot of things we do not think of, but we think of that link with a particular teacher who at a moment in time was extremely important to us in our development. I think we all do that.

As we start looking at the goals and objectives of education, and when we have been going back and looking at the 13 that are the most recent that we have had in front of us, to a certain extent we look at those and we say, "I guess those are generally all right." If we start to think longer and harder, there are some other areas which we are clearer about now than we were then and we start to talk about some of those things, for example, in the area Mr. Johnston has sometimes talked about, the community and the individual. What does "community school" mean any more in a variety of areas where community is defined very differently to what it was before. The kids are being bused off to French immersion or there is a community there this year that was not there the year before.

The one constant in all of this is that at some point Johnny or Susie enters classroom, with or without walls, and there is a teacher there. We have a number of goals, all sorts of things, that we are expecting to happen within that class setting and this teacher is somehow going to do it; not just this one but the expectation is that all, however many thousands we have in the system, are going to be prepared to that.

It strikes me that as we look at our goals and as we review them and perhaps offer suggestions—and I think this is a proper role for this committee to suggest changes, additions, what have you—it becomes very important to determine which goals are best implemented through the elementary and secondary systems, which, in a sense, we are dealing with more specifically because of the Ministry of Education, and those which are more properly done either through other

ministries—Colleges and Universities or Skills Development—or other institutions which may not be primarily educational in nature. Also, what is it then that we should be doing with our teacher education programs so that those teachers in the classroom have the tools and the support to do what it is that we as a society seem to be expecting them to do?

I do not think there is any question that any member of this committee would have had the experience where we have been in schools and we have seen marvellous individual teachers handling a whole series of complex situations in a classroom and where we have walked out noting the excellence of what has been going on. By the same token, we have sometimes seen well-motivated teachers trying to cope with a problem, an issue or a situation where clearly they do not have the skills to handle that. Whether there was some training for them or what, it is not working. I would be interested in terms of that, the direction.

I think there have been a number of things that have been said over the last year or so in terms of changes to the teacher education system and how the ministry, in looking at the role of the teacher, is trying to be mindful of what is realistic to expect of that individual in conjunction with others, but none the less it is the teacher who really is the constant. How do we relate the goals to that role and what kinds of things are we looking at in trying to make the teacher's role one where it is positive and productive and that individual has got a support system that perhaps is more effective in providing the service required?

Hon. Mr. Ward: If the committee can come forward with a recommendation that can achieve that sort of merger it would be a tremendously significant contribution. I certainly agree with all your observations and I think they are shared by most people who have ever had children within the system.

1630

In my opening remarks, I made reference to the fact that one of the items I did not feel very comfortable discussing at this point, in the absence of the final report of the teacher education review committee, was the whole issue of teacher training and the extent to which we not only prepare those entering the system but ensure that they continuously have the skills for a system that changes. We expect that to be ready in very short order. If the committee has not had the opportunity, I hope that by the fall it does

bring in some of the people who have been principally involved in that.

Mr. Beer: I think that would be very important and useful because a lot of the things the committee may wish to be moving towards recommending simply are not going to work if those are isolated from the teacher.

The other thing in relation to these goals is in some instances to have to be rather specific about saying that, in terms of this or that goal, that is something the elementary or secondary system really ought not to be doing or simply is not equipped to do.

Hon. Mr. Ward: That is right. That and the point you made about the role of other agencies or institutions is a very, very important point. I do not think it is enough to say that these are all the things we want to achieve through our system of education unless we really believe that the system as it is has the ability to provide all of those things. You have also to be realistic in this regard. The point I made earlier is the constant notion of loading on the system more and more. I do not disagree with the notion that the schools should be the place for the development of these values or notions or whatever; there has to be a realistic recognition of whether the school can do it all as presently constituted.

Mr. Beer: That may be one of the elements. As presently constituted, it perhaps cannot. Yet there may be a sense that it must. Therefore, that will have links in terms of how it is then constituted and what is the role of the teachers. If you look particularly at teachers in the primary area today who are very much involved in the pupil-centred learning—I forget what the jargon is—

Interjection: Child-centred.

Mr. Beer: —some of the things being done there are really extremely interesting and produce some fascinating, very positive results, but they really have to be handled by somebody who knows what he or she is doing. Otherwise, they really do not work. Therefore, you have a goal which is very laudable but which is impossible to achieve.

Dr. Shapiro: I certainly agree with you that in the end there is nothing as important as the teacher who is there with the students in the classroom. No matter what we say or do, in the end unless that person is somehow empowered to move ahead in a productive way, it is all for naught.

In that context, it would be interesting to see what the teacher education review committee has

to say about internships for teachers or about the process of induction, to put it more generically. Once they have left school but are in the system, how do you help people become more fully professional than they could possibly be just by having gone to school for a while? We will be very interested in those results because my own sense of it is that we probably have the best-educated cohort of teachers in the world.

Our teachers in Ontario are not only very well educated, but we tend to attract to the faculties of education very high quality graduates. So we cannot complain we do not have a well-educated professional group. We also have a professional group that is very active in its own professional development. Of the roughly 100,000 teachers in the province, at least 20,000 to 25,000 each year take part in the ministry-sponsored in-service programs, let alone the huge panoply of other programs that various school boards or teachers' associations might put together.

The missing link, it seems to me, is in two places. One has to do with teacher education and one does not. The one that has to do with teacher education is the question of induction. What do you do to help a person become more fully professional more quickly once he starts to practise? How can the peer group, or whatever other kind of arrangements one can make, be used to make that more effective?

The other has to do with something we talked about earlier, and that is to do with assessment of outcomes. Although people say things such as the child-centred approach certainly yields wonderful results, the real question is whether or not it does. Although everyone has seen good examples, so to speak, that is not the public policy question. The public policy question is whether, in general, for those who find it most comfortable, this yields the kind of results one hopes it will. I think quite likely it does actually; that is where my intuition takes me. But the point of view of the provincial review program is that we cannot rely simply on intuition.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: In this day and age, when we are presuming that the child-centred approach and activity-oriented—whatever the jargon is—approach is the norm in the junior public school area, is it really?

Dr. Shapiro: We do know the answer to that.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Do we know the answer to that?

Dr. Shapiro: The answer to that is that it is not. I would not say it is not the norm. It is the expressed aim of all and sundry, whether you are talking about the ministry, the individual school

boards, the principals or whatever. That is the only publicly acceptable aim, apparently. I spend a day a week sitting in the back of classrooms, about half of them in elementary schools and the other half in secondary schools. I would say, although it is not uncommon, neither can one say it is the norm. My own view about these things is that I think it is important not to be too categorical.

If it is true that in the end everything depends on the effectiveness of the interaction between the students and other students and the teacher, then why should we imagine that one particular approach is going to be the right one for everybody? Maybe some teachers can make approach A work and other teachers make approach B work. No matter which memo we send from the ministry on which week, they turn around and do the thing that works for them in the classroom. I would say there is nothing wrong with that, assuming reasonable, minimal standards, let's say, and that the outcome seems to be appreciated by those who are involved, that is, primarily the students and their parents.

Mr. Beer: I agree with that in principle and we are perhaps getting a little specific, but just to end off on that one, I think a dilemma arises in that. I think you are right that you may have an older teacher who has gone through a different process but has developed in terms of that process a marvellous relationship with the kids in helping them to learn. What becomes a problem now is that you then will have somebody who, say, does that at grade 1. The next year the child is in with someone who is gung-ho on the activity centre and is tremendous and terrific, but then some of the kids start to get a bit lost because they have sort of gotten used to the other one.

I think this is one of the areas where we are going to have to look at, and not where we are mandating or imposing, "Thou shalt teach this way," and the old argument about it being teacher-proof, which is an important sort of concept, but recognizing that some of the different approaches may result in real learning problems for the kids themselves.

Dr. Shapiro: I think that is why—again, I do not mean this in a religious sense but at least in a professional sense—I am very distrustful of evangelical approaches to pedagogy, because they ignore the fact that there are real differences between people and that what works depends, and that what a great teacher is is someone who senses what those differences are and can recognize the difficulties as they develop and

adjust the situation, depending on the evidence the teacher sees every day in the classroom.

Sometimes it means you have to deal with this child differently. Sometimes it means that maybe this child is better handled in another environment, perhaps in another teacher's class, or whatever. The challenge is to be able to be flexible enough to do that. That is what good teachers do.

1640

Mr. R. F. Johnston: When you say that, you are at least coming down to some basic requirement. There you were talking about flexibility. I can think of some old authoritarian teachers of mine who were regarded as great teachers, but they did not spare the rod. It never helped me, but they certainly did not spare it.

I worry about that in the context of what a lot of the people coming before us have talked about, and that is the importance of the process in terms of that being part of the product. The wonderful thing where the child-centred approach works is the involvement of the child in decisions about what he is learning, and then that gets stifled in the next year or by a teacher in the elementary panel or throughout the whole high school curriculum, because that is not the norm at the high school.

Then you say maybe we should be looking at that in terms of the standard—

Dr. Shapiro: I am slightly more at ease about that than you are, partly because I think young people are a great deal more resilient than we give them credit for.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: If we want to teach them to be resilient and to adapt, maybe that is where we want to do it.

Dr. Shapiro: We do, don't we? You do not see the extremes very often. When you are visiting classrooms, you do not in fact come across many people at the extremes that we are discussing. But I accept that it is a real issue. I do accept the notion that the great advantage of what is referred to here as the child-centred approach is that the child becomes an independent learner when that approach is properly used. That is the objective of education in the end.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: An independent and co-operative one obviously, which is also—

Dr. Shapiro: Yes, a good point.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I had hoped—and we obviously cannot take a long time today—that we might have had some more discussion about the notion of where we start the education system and getting back to that.

Accepting the deputy's distinctions between the levels and what we are trying to do, and thinking about the disadvantaged economic groups or particular cultural groups in our society at this point, and thinking about the deficit they come into the system with and the difficulty in finding the resources from grades 1 to 8 at the moment to deal with that character-building and the basics for those people before they ever get to that supposed transition, the adulthood thing, I was wondering if we could have some commentary from you about the role of when entrance might be seen to be important and in what ways, because the pedagogy sure changes a great deal from early childhood education through the elementary panel.

Hon. Mr. Ward: Clearly, there is virtual uniformity in terms of opinion as to the importance of starting the process much earlier than it currently does. At least in terms of the system you made reference to Radwanski's suggestion that it begin at age 3. Take a look elsewhere; same conclusions. I guess what it comes down to is not so much a determination of where it should start; it is how to achieve that, given the realities of having to make provision for an earlier entrance. I do not think many people view that—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: So you think there is actually close to unanimity on that particular goal? I am surprised at that—

Hon. Mr. Ward: I am not saying there is unanimity. What I am saying is that there is a consensus out there that the educational system does need to start earlier. That may in fact be a determination that the committee comes to, and we will look forward to that. My concern is our ability to respond to it. It might be something that is fundamentally difficult, and I think we all recognize that in this place as well.

Mr. Keyes: I just want to ask a supplementary. To be a little bit controversial, it is not my opinion that there is unanimity in the system that the formal education process should start much earlier, but rather that society has certain specific needs as we see an evolution in our style of society. At the moment, we are choosing to use the educational system as one of the ways of meeting that need.

In other words, we talk about putting day care centres in our schools. Surely that is simply a reflection of the fact that we have decided that it is easier to meet the need for additional day care spaces by using existing structures that are there in some instances, plus adding them on. We have some societies that do extremely well in the

education of their young and yet do not start formal education until six, seven and even, in one case I can think of, eight years of age.

I would not want us to quickly say that we have all agreed that formal education must start earlier. I was always of the opinion that we should never have started education based on a certain age of a child, but rather on a stage of development, which becomes much more difficult to measure. But we have always said, "You must start school by a specific age."

When I started teaching, aeons ago, the official age at which you must start educating your child—and I do not think it has changed—was eight. The only reason I became a teacher was because there were children who were approaching eight years of age in the rural community where I lived who had never yet been to school. The late Dr. J. R. McCarthy, who was the inspector of the day, said, "Farmers: These young people must get to school and you've got to provide the schooling." So it was that at age 17 in 1948 I started teaching them without a day's training.

Hon. Mr. Ward: OK. My other point is that I have yet to run into an elementary teacher or anyone involved directly in educating our smallest kids who did not believe and recognize the distinct advantage of earlier—

Mr. Keyes: I am not saying that is impossible, and the teachers may not say it. I am just saying that as a society, we have not really all agreed that it should be there. I think—and that is why I am being argumentative here—that our present role of moving towards day care to some extent is meeting another need in society and is a very practical way—

Hon. Mr. Ward: Formal education may be day care, not necessarily—

Mr. Keyes: Because you run into the dichotomy of the type of function that goes on in the day care socialization process versus formal education, totally different from—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: There are fascinating changes in senior kindergarten just in terms of methodology. Although I agree with you that consensus is not there—and the response from my constituents sure showed that it was not there on child care in the schools—the difficulty I see with retarding the date when kids enter, or doing it on the basis of their developmental level at that stage, is that with the middle class participating so much in early childhood education opportunities, to a much greater degree than the working class is able to do, that is going to make the

distinction about the outcome even harder to deal with if we do not put in some kind of a structure within as public a system as possible.

Dr. Shapiro: I do not know if anyone saw the front page of the New York Times today, but I did. There is a map at the bottom of the front page which shows northern Europe with Sweden in white and all the other countries in grey. It says, "Can you name this country?" or something like that and refers to an article on page X which explains that in a recent survey of geography achievement among a number of countries, Sweden knew more about the rest of the world than anyone else. Americans were 10th or 13th, something like that. I forget the precise ranking.

The reason it relates to this conversation is that Sweden does start its formal schooling later than we do, but it does have a much more complex child care system. My own sense of it in trying to imagine the public policy for the future is that the enrichment of the child care system, however it is designed and whatever, is likely to yield us more benefits in the immediate future and more likelihood of success than the reaching further downward of the formal system.

You are correct that in systems in heterogeneous societies—and we are a much more heterogeneous society than Sweden—the differences between people in various socioeconomic groups get wider, the more that only one group can access the opportunities before formal education. That has been shown in a number of different countries.

Hon. Mr. Ward: Does that formal education include child care?

Dr. Shapiro: What happens in systems that have complex child care is that those differences tend to be minimized. If you have a system which does not—middle-class people, let's say, or people who are more advantaged by those opportunities anyway because they can afford them—the differences among young people who are five or six get larger.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I think we are saying that there is not even a consensus here on it, but there is a consensus around how important it is to get an idea of what our goals should be on that.

Thank you, Madam Chairman, for staring me down.

Madam Chairman: I would never, ever do that. I would try, but I have never succeeded yet, so I do not know why I would today.

I would like to thank the minister and the deputy for appearing before our committee today

and for giving us the benefit of their insight and wisdom.

Just before the members go back to their offices, if you could be patient for one minute more, I do have several announcements.

You may recall that when Walter Pitman appeared before the committee last week, he issued an invitation for us to go to a seminar being held at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education in October relating to the goals and philosophy of education. They have patterned their whole conference on our committee's work. I am not sure if that is flattery or if they are not quite sure we are going to do the job so they are going to take over. At any rate, he asked if you could note the dates of October 14 and 15 in your diaries and he will be providing us with further information later on. That is just before the House goes back in session in October.

Second, while this completes this particular portion of the hearings of the select committee on education relating specifically to goals and philosophy, our work has really just begun. In September, we will reconvene for public hearings on certain aspects of the organization of the educational process, namely, streaming, semestering, OSIS and grade promotion. We will be conducting our hearings across the province, in Toronto, Thunder Bay, Ottawa, Windsor and Sudbury.

Although the deadline has passed for making an oral presentation to the committee in September or October, written briefs are certainly welcome at any time.

If people in our viewing audience would like to share their thoughts with the committee, they are welcome to write to the clerk of the select committee on education, Lynn Mellor, Room 472, Main Legislative Building, Queen's Park, Toronto, M7A 1A2. Ms. Mellor will certainly make sure that each member has a copy of your exhibit. Please do write in if you are very concerned about the topics we will be covering in September and will not have an opportunity to appear before us.

One final note of warning from the clerk to the members, and I would like you to pay particular attention to this: The clerk will be distributing to your offices, approximately a week before the September hearings begin, a copy of all the exhibits to date for the September hearings. She will not be carting down three truckloads of exhibits to the hearings per se, so please remember to bring your exhibits and your written presentations with you when you come to the September hearings.

Mr. Mahoney: Are you sure you do not want us to memorize them?

Madam Chairman: Actually, she did request that, but I felt it was somewhat unreasonable, so you can just remember to bring them with you.

The select committee on education will stand adjourned until September 12 at 10 o'clock in this very room.

The committee adjourned at 4:54 p.m.

CONTENTS

Thursday, July 28, 1988

Philosophy and Goals of Education	E-487
Ministry of Education	E-487
Adjournment	E-515

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Chairman: Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)**Vice-Chairman:** Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)

Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)

Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)

Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)

Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)

Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)

Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)

O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)

Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)

Substitution:

Beer, Charles (York North L) for Mrs. O'Neill

Clerk: Mellor, Lynn**Staff:**

Porter, Ann, Research Officer, Legislative Research Service

Witnesses:**From the Ministry of Education:**

Ward, Hon. Christopher C., Minister of Education (Wentworth North L)

Shapiro, Dr. Bernard J., Deputy Minister of Education

Lipischak, William P., Director, Program Implementation and Review Branch

CA20N
XC2
1988
E28



Legislative
Publications

No. E-12

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Select Committee on Education

Organization of the Education Process



First Session, 34th Parliament

Monday, September 12, 1988

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario
Editor of Debates: Peter Brannan

CONTENTS

Contents of the proceedings reported in this issue of Hansard appears at the back, together with a list of the members of the committee and other members and witnesses taking part.

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues can be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at (416) 965-2159.

Hansard subscription price is \$16.00 per session, from: Sessional Subscription Service, Information Services Branch, Ministry of Government Services, 5th Floor, 880 Bay Street, Toronto, M7A 1N8. Phone (416) 965-2238.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Monday, September 12, 1988

The committee met at 10 a.m. in room 151.

ORGANIZATION OF THE EDUCATION PROCESS IN ONTARIO

Madam Chairman: Good morning. Welcome to the hearings of the select committee on education. As you know, in July we conducted hearings by invitation on the goals and philosophy of education in Ontario. At this stage, we are going to proceed with the organization of the educational process and look at certain aspects of that, including streaming, semestering, the Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions curriculum guidelines, and grade promotion. Welcome back to members of the committee and to our spectators today.

I have a few announcements to make. As you know, there was a request made of the clerk that exhibits be made available a week prior to the committee hearings so that they could be perused by the members. The clerk has certainly endeavoured to do that. However, as you may realize, it is also contingent on the clerk's having received them from the presenters. I think we have the bulk of them for this week, but if you do see gaps, it is simply because the clerk has not received them yet.

I remind members, if they are planning to have a substitute, to please give the exhibits to their substitutes prior to their coming to the committee meetings so that they too may have a chance to look over the material.

An updated agenda will be provided every Monday. You should have an agenda before you at this time in which you will see that our presenters this morning will be from the Ministry of Education.

The travel documents will be provided to each member the Thursday before we go on the road. Next week we will be in Ottawa for two days and in Sudbury for one day. The following week we will be going to Windsor on the Monday and then I believe to Thunder Bay on the Thursday. So prepare yourselves for that exotic tour of the province, or at least a small portion of the province, but we are looking forward to hearing opinions from people in those areas.

We will start off with the Ministry of Education. We have Wally Beevor, who is the assistant deputy minister for the learning pro-

grams division; Ms. Sheila Roy, who is the director for the centre for secondary and adult education, and Mrs. Shannon Hogan, director of the centre for early childhood and elementary education.

Welcome. You may begin whenever you are ready. Identify yourselves for purpose of electronic Hansard. I think we can figure out who Mr. Beevor is.

Mr. Beevor: I hope so.

Madam Chairman: You take it from there.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Mr. Beevor: Thank you very much. It is our pleasure to be with you this morning. We are prepared to comment on the agenda items that you have identified: OSIS, streaming, semestering and grade promotion.

Sheila Roy, on my left, is the director for the centre for secondary and adult education and Shannon Hogan, on my right, is the director of early childhood and elementary education. These two people have prepared documentation for you and will take you through their information, hopefully in 20 to 25 minutes each. The time for the presentations, obviously, will leave ample time for us to have questions and discussion.

I would like to start with Shannon, the director of the early childhood and elementary branch, to share the information she has prepared for you.

Mrs. Hogan: I would like to begin by saying that what your first set of hearings did for me was to reinforce once again the realization that education is terribly important to many of us in Ontario, whether we are parents, educators, representatives, elected representatives or representatives of business or industry or aboriginal or ethnocultural associations. So many of our hopes and our aspirations for our own children, for our local communities, for our society, really rest on our expectations for the public education system. Our challenge in education is to respond to the diversity of expectations for the one million children in our elementary schools and to respond in a manner that serves both society and individuals well.

I am pleased to be here today to talk with you and to respond to your questions about some of the policies, the issues, practices and directions

that guide and influence elementary education, from junior kindergarten to grade 8.

At the beginning of your initial set of hearings, Duncan Green outlined curriculum content in the elementary and secondary schools and he also referred to Ontario's approach to curriculum development as being based on a partnership of shared responsibility. The Ministry of Education sets broad policy guidelines and curriculum expectations. For young children enrolled in kindergarten to grade 6, this policy is outlined in *The Formative Years* and in the new science guideline, *Science is Happening Here*.

These policies are elaborated in more than 50 resource documents, English and French, for teachers, which focus on various aspects of programming, ranging from elements of curriculum such as reading, spelling, writing and mathematics, to cross-curricular emphases such as multiculturalism and values.

Ms. Roy will say more about how our policies and documents are developed in collaboration with our partners in education.

The program for the grade 7 and grade 8 students is described in OSIS, the Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions curriculum guidelines. The intermediate division guidelines are used for various subject disciplines in those grades. School boards use these provincial guidelines as a basis for local policy and program development.

I would like to address a few of the important principles that really drive policy development and program at both the provincial and at the local levels.

The first such principle is that school success is maximized when learning opportunities recognize and build on children's aptitudes and children's life experiences. Our children in Ontario come to school with very diverse life experiences, learning abilities, linguistic, racial and ethnocultural roots. While children of particular age groups do have many similar characteristics, they also represent a wide range of individual differences in terms of background and learning style. Those of you who are parents know how even your own children differ.

1010

School boards must have the autonomy and flexibility to take provincial guidelines and to develop local programs and practices relevant to both their individual population and to the wider society. A second principle is that success in school is supported by a curriculum that adapts as the learner develops. In early school years, and even before children come to school, they learn

best through firsthand, concrete experiences. To support the need for active learning, *The Formative Years* outlines curriculum in broad discipline areas: the arts, communication and environmental studies. Schools implement the curriculum in a framework that provides for integration, balance and, most of all, an experience base.

Older children begin to think abstractly and can learn from secondary sources and from vicarious experience. Accordingly, the curriculum for students in the late elementary grades 7 and 8, set out in the draft OSIS document, is a more subject-specific framework. You will recall that the deputy minister, when he was here, spoke about the shift in focus between the two panels in education. The program in grades 7 and 8 provides the bridge to secondary school and, at the same time, provides the beginnings of the transition to adult life.

A third principle in Ontario school program building is that children's success in school is further maximized by a program that develops basic learning processes and does so in a broad context which includes knowledge and skills but also attitudes and values. To achieve success in their school years and adult lives, obviously, children need competency in a variety of basic learning skills. They must continue to develop what we know as the traditional basic skills: abilities to read, listen, speak, write, understand and use numbers.

It is equally essential, however, that children also acquire other basic learning skills: the ability to access information and use it, to receive and interpret ideas, information and feelings. Basic to all learning are the important skills of inquiry and problem-solving, the ability to analyse issues and to formulate solutions. It is vital that children learn how to apply all of these basic skills not only to school and home, but eventually to the world of work and life in general. OSIS guidelines already provide for those considerations. The renewal of curriculum in *The Formative Years* will address these concerns more effectively.

A fourth principle of program is that success in school is promoted by ongoing systematic assessment of children's learning. Our current curriculum policies outline expectations for learning that reflect not only intellectual objectives but also those related to a child's social, emotional and physical development. As we work towards refining standards through learning benchmarks at the divisional levels of the elementary school, we are also examining the

kind of support that principals and teachers need to expand and refine their assessment and reporting strategies. The learning skills projects which are now under way in six school boards in Ontario have, as one of their focuses, the refinement of assessment and reporting strategies, and their findings will be shared province-wide.

Most important, children's success in school is enhanced through a close partnership with the home. Not only at school entry but at every stage of a child's school life, education practices must involve parents in participation in, understanding and contributing to their child's learning in school. Ontario policies, whether they are ones that focus on early identification of needs, reporting of children's progress, identification of placement and review for children with exceptional needs or secondary school course selection, are all predicated on the understanding that parents are not only the most significant partners of the school, but also the child's most important advocates.

The challenge for teachers and principals today is to seek out the most effective and productive ways to involve parents in a child's school life. This challenge is made more complex in light of the number of children who come from families with single parents, families where both parents work outside the home, or where neither English nor French is the language of the home. The diversity of local needs and the policy of local decision-making means that organization in elementary schools differs in various localities. There are, however, some things we can say about general school organization relative to the issues of streaming and grade promotion.

Streaming in elementary schools usually is related to children identified as exceptional learners. Depending on local school policies, children such as blind, gifted or learning-disabled may be placed in separate, congregated classrooms. However, many school boards are integrating these children in peer-age classes for part or all of the day.

Children are grouped for various purposes in elementary school. It is sometimes thought that they are placed in static ability groups in kindergarten and remain there until secondary school. In reality, flexible grouping is the norm. The Formative Years policy and its support documents give direction for such groupings. Teachers use instructional groups, depending on the particular needs and interests of the children, and these groups vary in composition and in

numbers throughout the child's day and, in fact, throughout the child's school life.

The grade 8 teacher and principal recommend course-level placement for students as they are about to enter secondary school. This may consist of a mixture of courses at the advanced and general or general and basic levels. The school recommendation is based on the student's attitudes and achievement, but it is important to recognize that the final decision for course-level placement is made by the student and parent as part of their course selection. It is also important to recognize that students may adjust their course levels and their choices after the first month in grade 9.

The promotion of elementary pupils from grade to grade is an area of concern to parents, children and educators alike. Most children are promoted with their peers. The debate is over the best placement for children who are experiencing slower development and/or lower levels of achievement. Is it best to repeat the school year with a younger age group or to be promoted with their age peers? Ministry of Education policy states that schools must meet the individual needs of pupils. The Education Act, in subsection 236(g), gives the principal of each school the authority to promote pupils, subject to revision by the appropriate supervisory officer.

The OSIS document allows a secondary school principal to accept a student even if the student has not been promoted from grade 8. The decision as to grade placement of children experiencing difficulties varies from board to board and from school to school, depending on a judgement of principals and supervisory officers. These decisions are the result of careful consideration of many factors, including information from teachers and parents regarding the child's total development—social, physical, emotional—and also the child's intellectual achievement.

Schools which promote children despite low academic achievement have carefully considered and adopted alternative instructional strategies that they feel are more beneficial to the child. I would like to share some of the thinking underlying the differences in opinion about practices of retention and promotion. The topic has been researched since approximately 1911. Data on retention, for example, indicates that retention practices tend to penalize males, especially from lower socioeconomic immigrant and cultural minority groups. It is assumed that failing a grade motivates children to do better in some cases. The reality appears to be that children become discouraged, as evidenced by

increased behavioural and discipline problems, and that many high school dropouts were, in fact, elementary school repeaters.

It seems to be more beneficial to keep children with their own age group, but at the same time to provide remedial teaching strategies so that children have more opportunities to succeed. Schools which practise this policy of what some people call "social promotion" provide repetition and reteaching of the unsuccessful areas of learning by using special-education-teacher or classroom-teacher interventions. Children do mature at different rates, and there is a great variety in the pattern and sequence of their learning. The Ministry of Education policy of end-of-division rather than end-of-grade expectations allows for this normal variation.

Peer-age promotion also allows for natural differences in the sequence of children's learning and achievement. The provincial policy of early and ongoing identification of children's learning needs and school board practices of systematic, continued assessment, diagnosis, modification of programs and flexible instructional groupings can combine to make a potentially successful experience for all children.

1020

I point out too that the ministry has two monetary practices which help meet the diversity of children's learning needs and are intended to provide increased resources for better instruction. The new lower-class-size funding for grades 1 and 2 encourages teachers to individualize program and to better accommodate the developmental variations in young children. The compensatory weighting factors in the general legislative grants allow moneys to be spent in areas of special need. These policies are intended to improve elementary school program delivery, especially for children most at risk in the school system.

The curriculum is not delineated by specific grade-level content that children must acquire or repeat. How then do we, as parents or others, know what and how the children are doing? I have already mentioned early and ongoing identification procedures, which provide for assessment throughout the school life. The end-of-division expectations provide a focus for planning classroom programs and for meeting instruction on these based on ministry expectations. They also provide a basis for assessment.

The Ontario assessment instrument pool and its French counterpart, BIMO, la banque d'instruments de mesure de l'Ontario, provide teachers with a base for assessing achievement in

certain subject areas. Provincial reviews enable us to sample, across the province, learning achievement and teaching practice relative to specific curriculum areas. In this school year, there will be provincial reviews of mathematics and reading at the end of the junior division.

OSIS has been consistently monitored and will continue to be reviewed. The present renewal of formative years policy expects to focus both on the development of skills and character as it sets out more explicit, standard expectations for all areas of schooling and children's learning. These will include divisional benchmarks of achievements, as well as improved strategies for pupil assessment, instructional practice and reporting to parents.

There are many stakeholders in education. Each brings different expectations and concerns. Some of the current questions being considered within the branch I head and within the ministry generally, and by educators and parents in Ontario, include the following: how do we set learning expectations that are relevant to children of diverse social and cultural backgrounds? How much can be mandated provincially for schools of such diverse populations? What is the appropriate balance between central Ministry of Education policy decision-making and local school board autonomy?

How does education interact most effectively with other ministries to meet the health and welfare needs of children? Child care, for example, is an important step in interministerial co-operation around the provision of services. How can parents best be involved in decisions regarding their child and their child's schools? What constitutes the most effective and appropriate curriculum for the primary and junior divisions? What constitutes moral education in elementary schools and what is the appropriate approach to religious education in the public elementary schools?

You will, no doubt, be hearing many views on those issues and will have many such issues raised for you. I have appreciated the opportunity to participate in this forum and I look forward to responding to any questions you may have.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mrs. Hogan. Would you prefer to hold questions to the end or would it be acceptable to—

Mr. Beevor: If we could, Madam Chairman, we would prefer to have the secondary school presentation and then questions, if that is acceptable.

Madam Chairman: Fine. Please proceed.

Ms. Roy: Thank you for the invitation to present some information today regarding the current secondary school program in Ontario. I would like to begin by making a few overview comments and then expand on each of the four areas identified by your committee. Along with Mrs. Hogan, I would like to say how much I have enjoyed looking at some of the material from earlier discussions and that I look forward to a discussion at the end of my comments.

The secondary school program in Ontario carries on with the program provided in the latter grades of elementary school as just described by Mrs. Hogan, but the emphasis in the secondary school shifts to knowledge and attitude development, helping each student bridge the gap from adolescence through to adulthood.

When they leave secondary school, at whatever point, approximately 15 per cent of students go to university, approximately 19 per cent to 20 per cent go to the colleges of applied arts and technology and the rest go into the workplace. The needs of the over 60 per cent of young people who enter the workforce directly from secondary school currently have a very high priority within our ministry, particularly with the student retention and transition project.

The renewed emphasis on co-operative education programs, as well as the new general- and basic-level courses, will, we hope, provide for much more successful transition from schooling to meaningful, successful employment, knowing the importance of that first successful employment.

The program currently in grades 9 and 10 is deliberately broad-based to provide students with a breadth of educational experience, and at the same time to ensure a good foundation in such areas as English or français, math and science. Students who wish, of course, may specialize in grades 11 and 12. At this time, there are 16 compulsory credits required for the 30-credit diploma. Most schools tend to concentrate many of these 16 in grades 9 and 10. Although, on the one hand, this ensures a common core curriculum and assists students to make a smooth transition into secondary school, it may not provide students with as many opportunities to explore their own interests in grades 9 and 10.

As I go along, I will try to comment on some of the merits and questions that are raised regarding current policy.

If I may, I would like to take a moment or two to comment on the secondary education review project, SERP, which began way back in 1980 and culminated back in 1983 with the release of

OSIS. SERP was certainly an intensive review of all aspects of our intermediate and senior divisions from grade 7 through to 13. It involved meetings across the province and a large special symposium on secondary education. The committees of that project reflected the makeup of the province and went beyond our educational community.

The review itself led to a series of recommendations that were incorporated as part of OSIS. The first students coming under these new requirements started grade 9 in 1984, and this past June there were the first graduates, those completing the program in four years, with those taking somewhat of a larger and more broadly based program graduating this June. As the deliberations regarding SERP began eight years ago, and the schools have been going through the process of putting OSIS itself into effect for four years, it certainly is time to review what has happened.

At this point, we are intending a review of OSIS in two stages, the first perhaps housekeeping, bringing it up to date in reference to some of the new guidelines that have been released, changes in numbers and titles of regulations, if you wish, but the second review would examine the specific areas of concern such as semestering, compulsory credits, is the number appropriate, are they the right subjects, questions of student retention and other issues such as those that you, as a select committee, will identify for us.

OSIS provides mandatory policy statements in many areas such as compulsory courses and diploma requirements, but school boards and secondary school principals have freedom to provide a variety of programs reflecting the unique needs of their students. It is my hope that more use will be made of this flexibility as people better understand the potential within OSIS.

This flexibility includes the decision to semester or not as an organizational structure, to offer co-operative education throughout the grades 9 to 12 program in all areas, to provide alternatives for specialized schools, to provide within the school independent or private study opportunities, to have work experience as part of the program and to establish transitional courses between the various levels of basic, general and advanced.

1030

There are a number of school boards across the province that are taking advantage of this flexibility now. I will just mention two or three. Both the Wellington county and Timiskaming boards are developing very innovative programs

that will enable students to have both the secondary school diploma and apprenticeship certification.

Marc Garneau Collegiate, a school of science in East York, is a school for students with particular interest in the area of science and mathematics. I know that some of you have seen the Cochrane-Iroquois Falls Board of Education secondary school program, which is an example of a creative way of providing a wide choice of courses in a relatively small school. There are many schools for the performing arts around the province. Some boards, such as Lincoln, have really utilized the possibility of packaging courses at the senior division so students come out with great strength in one area of their diplomas.

I would now like to take a few moments to speak about each of the targeted areas in a little more detail. Before each, I will comment on some of the merits, as we see them, and some of the questions that there are regarding current policy.

The first is semestering. Semestering is not a new phenomenon in Ontario and certainly is not a byproduct of OSIS. In 1980, when the secondary education review project began, already about 50 per cent of the secondary schools in the province were operating under some form of semestering.

The usual format we find in the secondary semestered school is to offer each course every day, from 70 to 80 minutes, from September to January or from February through to June, for a credit. The student normally takes three or four courses each semester. So in a given year, a student would have anywhere from six to eight credits.

Semestering originated in Ontario in the late 1970s in some small secondary schools in order to provide as wide a range of course options to students as possible. Then in the early 1980s, as enrolment declined across the province, more schools were semestered for this same reason. However, others have moved to the semester format as a means of providing larger blocks of time, for example, for shop classes or for co-op education programs. At this time, over 75 per cent of the secondary schools in the province are semestered.

There certainly are some disadvantages in semestering. Teachers of cumulative subjects, such as math and second languages, are concerned that there can be a time gap, sometimes of a full year, between consecutive courses. There is also the concern that in semestering there may be a dropoff in the amount of subject coverage.

However, many students seem to do better in a semestered school since they are able to concentrate for a longer period of time on fewer subjects and relate much more closely to fewer teachers. It also appears to be easier for some students to complete diploma requirements and entry to university requirements, if they wish, in four or four and a half years. In addition, some subjects certainly lend themselves more appropriately to longer periods. We think of physical education and science, particularly laboratory periods.

Levels of difficulty or streaming: since 1940, at least, there has been mandated streaming in Ontario's secondary schools, with the exception of a 12-year period, that 12-year period being from 1972 to 1983 when credits were introduced. Streaming has been an area of continuous discussion and controversy among those concerned with quality education of our young people.

In that 12-year period, 1972 to 1983, no levels of difficulty were mandated by the Ministry of Education. To fill this—if I could use the word—vacuum, secondary schools created their own levels to the point where I believe there was no general understanding across the province, or sometimes, even from school to school within the same board, of what was meant by the descriptions.

Some schools ended up with six or seven levels, and labelled students as basic, general, advanced, modified, enriched, occupations or terminal. Terminal students were the young people who were enrolled in a program of, at most, two years in secondary school and then were expected to leave.

Mr. Jackson: They usually did, because they were expected to. Is that not how it works?

Ms. Roy: Yes, absolutely. Expectations are incredibly important. OSIS attempted to bring some order to this situation and attempted, for the first time, to define in our documents levels of difficulty in terms of expected learning outcomes. It was a tremendously difficult task.

I think it is important to emphasize that now the courses are labelled as basic, advanced and general, not the students. It has been a major challenge to make this change labelling courses, not students, in school programs. A student should be able to take courses at one, two or three levels of difficulty at the same time, whichever mix is appropriate to that individual student.

We realize that not every school is able to offer all courses at all three levels of difficulty. Some schools, such as those called "vocational," provide basic-level courses only, while some

academic schools provide few courses at other than the advanced level. Each type of organization believes it is meeting the needs of students in that setting, that it is the best for the students.

It is my hope, as we get further into the new guidelines, that schools and school boards will continue to review these decisions to offer courses at only one or two levels in the school because it does not seem to meet the full range of need of an individual student.

The third area, and Mrs. Hogan referred to this a little earlier, is OSIS and the curriculum guidelines. Once OSIS was completed and released, it became necessary to revise each of the existing subject guidelines, and I am sure we all agree it was a mammoth task. Each of the new guidelines reflects both the goals of education, on the one hand, and the new stipulations within OSIS. Every curriculum committee was given that as a starting point, and of course each of our guidelines, with a couple of exceptions such as anglais, are developed in two languages, both French and English.

One of the greatest challenges to the teachers on these writing committees was the SERP decision to describe the three levels in each of the subject guidelines. They brought to this task their many years of teaching experience and their collective wisdom. Even though the guidelines were developed by separate committees—we had approximately 30 to 35 committees sitting—a remarkable degree of consistency was achieved with the basic description in OSIS, and across all of the guidelines. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of that consistency.

There are many guidelines, but the focus of each is the individual student working with his or her teacher. Therefore, the guidelines had to be consistent with each other and we took many steps to ensure this.

The new guidelines are different in other ways. They not only update subject content, they deal with issues related to the real world, to living as students now and into the 1990s. The new program, as it is presented, must be seen to be relevant by the students themselves.

Each of the guidelines speaks to each of these: career awareness, as it relates to whatever the discipline is; principles of sex equity, the elimination of sex role stereotyping; multiculturalism; the use of computers and other new technology; values issues, and always, language across the curriculum. These are integral to each of the new disciplines.

For example, the principle of sex equity is dealt with as part of every program. Within the

mathematics guideline, the issue of math anxiety is dealt with. Within the history and contemporary studies program, there is a much more accurate presentation of both the experience and the contribution of women. Within the new science program, every unit requires that the social implications be a part of this study.

1040

One of our new guidelines which we are particularly proud of is the one on the native-as-a-second-language program. It may sound like rather unusual terminology given the content, but the fact is that for most youngsters studying Cree or Ojibway it may be an opportunity to learn a second language, although it is the first language of the family.

Some of our guidelines include reference to other significant social issues such as wife assault and family violence. Clearly, in spite of the current debate about the role of the school, the school must deal with social issues if it is to have any relevance and any long impact on how we live our lives.

If I might comment just briefly on evaluation standards, there are perhaps three points. Each of the new guidelines state student-learner objectives relative to the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes and include evaluation strategies related to student achievement of these objectives.

In reference to the Ontario academic courses, I would just make one comment about them. The OACs are different from grade 13s in a couple of very important ways. First of all, in the past, to get the most senior secondary school diploma it was necessary to have grade 13s because that is what you took to get your honour graduation diploma. However, under OSIS there is only one diploma for which you seek 30 credits including the mandatory. It is not necessary to have any OACs as a part of that diploma. The OACs are taken only if, as a student, you are intending to follow this through to university or you particularly want it for some other purpose.

To ensure that these OACs are academically rigorous, each requires a formal examination on a significant portion of the year's program. Teacher in-service programs, called TIP—we sometimes fall into the habit of using short forms, but it just refers to teacher in-service programs—have been held across the province for a number of the new OACs.

The objective of this TIP is to establish a common examination format—not a common exam, but a common examination format, thus ensuring consistency of expectations across the

province based on the new guideline. To date, these common examination format workshops have been implemented in English, calculus and art. We are moving this year into accounting, economics and français.

Earlier, Mrs. Hogan mentioned the provincial reviews as being an ongoing part of ensuring that that new program is in place. I will not comment on that any further because she has already spoken of it, except to mention that of course the provincial review will look at the degree of implementation. It will also look at student achievement and raise questions about the appropriateness of the curriculum to see if any change should be required.

Each of our policy guidelines is developed by a committee essentially made up of teachers, including those nominated by the Ontario Teachers' Federation. We also have representatives from universities, colleges and, in some cases, business and industry.

In this last round of renewal, over 1,000 teachers were involved in the committee process. I must tell you that as I met with those various committees over the last two or three years, I was incredibly impressed by the quality of our teaching profession across this province, their commitment to their task and their desire to produce the very best program for students.

They work incredibly hard. They would come in for the first week and put in regular days, nine to five. Then as week number two came along, I would see them there in the evenings. As the weeks went on, their eyes got larger and larger, but they were more and more excited about what they were doing. They work really hard.

However, once a committee completed its deliberations and had a draft guideline which it was justifiably very proud of, this draft was sent to each school board in the province. It was also sent through our contact to the colleges and to the universities and to any other interested group for a period of four months for people to tell us what they thought of the new guideline. There was always a great deal to say to us.

At first, people were not quite sure we were really going to listen to all of this validation, but as the revisions became clear, the involvement and support of this validation process was very extensive. This consultative method of curriculum development is extremely effective. The new guidelines are excellent, but it is a very time-consuming process. We know that and we are now searching for processes that would be equally effective but much faster.

Development of these new guidelines is almost complete, but it is important to remember that teachers in the schools are just at the beginning stages of implementing them. I have to be honest and tell you that, at first, there was great concern among the teachers that there was so much that had to be done in such a relatively short time. There is still concern, but what has changed is that once teachers have had a chance to work with these new guidelines produced by their peers, the reaction has become extremely positive. It is a matter of: How can we get on with it? Will we have enough time and support to do so?

To assist in that area, the new guidelines are delivered to school boards at least a year before we expect implementation to begin so that the teachers have a year in which to look at their current program, look at the new expectations and plan to phase it in. Some of the guidelines which are sequential, such as mathematics, will be phased in over a four-year period.

This is certainly a time of some juggling as we move from one set of guidelines to another. They are not all put in place at the same time across the province. However, from what I have seen, and I have met with a lot of teachers and superintendents of program, the quality of implementation is very high and the commitment is very strong. I would just like, as an aside, to comment on the very strong involvement of many of the teachers' subject professional associations. They have taken hold of the implementation and are making it theirs.

One often hears that the traditional subject disciplines are out of date, that there is or there ought to be a better way to organize understanding, knowledge and skill development. We also looked at this as part of SERP and, after considerable discussion, one step at least was taken in that direction within the history and contemporary studies guideline, where there was a sorting out of the skills and some of the understandings that run across a number of disciplines such as history, law, economics and studies of world religions. I think we certainly must give much more thought to such reorganization and elimination of overlap in future reviews of secondary programming.

The fourth and last area is grade promotion. Mrs. Hogan discussed this in reference to the elementary schools and the movement of students from the elementary into the secondary panel. With the adoption of the credit system in Ontario's secondary schools in 1972, grade promotion at the secondary level ended. Of

course, grade failure also ended. In the credit system, each course stands on its own and a student either passes or fails an individual course. Students therefore are rewarded for their successes and do not have these successes removed from them by failure elsewhere.

A concern raised by credit promotion and the resultant individual timetables is that students usually do not stay together with the same peers all day. It is quite possible that this may be a serious problem for students who are at risk. We try to encourage grade 9 classes to be established as cohorts that move through the day.

This is an area under a lot of study by our student retention transition project. You know, many students tell us they enjoy this variation, that they see it as a benefit. Sometimes you hear the complaint of a parent, "My daughter is in secondary school but I have absolutely no idea what grade she's in." That is true, because it is not unusual after the second year in secondary school that a student's timetable may consist of courses both from grades 9 and 10.

Either a youngster was not successful in one or two and is picking it up or has decided to catch back for a program which is only offered in grades 9 and 10, as well as the grades 11 and 12 OACs that she may be taking. This makes it difficult not only to keep students together from class to class, of course, but also to identify a student as a grade 11 or grade 12 student. We really cannot do that any more. A student after grade 10 is likely to be described as being in her third or fourth year of secondary school.

1050

I have tried to keep my comments brief, not all that successfully, and I have tried to focus in on the four topics. I do hope that all of this talk about structure and organization has not obscured our main objective, the creation of the best possible program opportunities for our students, in all of their wonderful variety, and the challenge and the joy of education.

Madam Chairman: Mr. Beevor, do you have any final comments?

Mr. Beevor: No, we have no further comment. We would be most happy to respond to any questions and enter into any discussion that is appropriate.

Madam Chairman: Before I open it up for questions from our members, I would just mention I was delighted to hear that Iroquois Falls has one of the most creative programs in the province. That happens to be my own alma mater from—I cannot even say years ago; I think it

has to be decades—but I am glad to know they are at the forefront. Also, I notice Timiskaming, and it is nice to see our northern schools are really doing so well.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: They supported the riff-raff.

Madam Chairman: I am not sure I should reward Mr. Johnston with the first question after that nasty comment to our northern members, but, Richard, you might like to start off.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Thank you for the presentation. It raised a number of the questions that we have been thinking about and that may point to some others we will be wanting to know more about.

I guess a lot of my questions will be quantitative and I wonder what you have in the way of quantity of statistical analysis of some of the things you said today, because one of the things that strikes me is that there is this balance that is played between local autonomy of the board and guidelines and things laid down from the province.

Other than the one percentage that was put out about 75 per cent of the schools being semestered at this point, I have no idea about what the takeup is on a bunch of these other things. I would be interesting in knowing if you have done an analysis of the OSIS to this point and what statistics come out of that that would be of interest to us.

I do not know how we want to deal with this. Some of this information you may have at your fingertips and other things may be things the witnesses would like to bring forward to the committee, but I would certainly like to know, for instance, the figures on the change in technical education that has taken place. We have had a lot of people raise concerns about the fact that there has been a huge drop in technical education in grades 9 and 10.

As I remember the argument early on, the hope was that people would opt into it as they got further along in their credits. Anecdotally, I am hearing back from teachers that that does not happen, that other choices start getting made and that just at the stage when we need more technically able people in our society and when you can give us a couple of examples of apprenticeship-style programs that are happening in isolated cases, in the overall we seem to be having a drop in enrolment in those courses.

I wonder if you can give us any idea to start off with on what is happening there.

Ms. Roy: I will just give a few comments. I do not have with me today the specific percentage of

decline related to tech ed, but we can certainly bring that over to you. There has very clearly been a decline in the enrolment of students involved in tech ed for the past decade, and it has been going down steadily. It appears that in the last year that has evened off, and our hope at this point, because I have not seen the data for this year, is that it may begin to increase.

My hope is based on the fact that I think the new guidelines are helpful. We have certainly put a lot of time into going around and talking with people around the province about ways to make the technical program more interesting to the student in the sense that the student can see the relevance of it for the student's life now and after school. These students leave in large numbers. There obviously have to be reasons for it.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Do you have the statistical information, though? In the first year, I remember, there was a 40 per cent drop predicted, and realized, as I recall, in 1984.

Ms. Roy: No, I am sorry to say I do not have the statistics with me today.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: But do you have that?

Ms. Roy: Yes, we do.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The ministry has that information. Could we have that in a linear fashion then?

Ms. Roy: Yes.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: How many schools have actually dropped their tech courses altogether? Has that taken place? You gave the one example of an apprenticeship program working in fairly nicely, but are there actually schools that have dropped their technical classes?

Ms. Roy: I do not know of any school at this point in time that has actually eliminated its program, but there may be one. We would have to have a look and find out.

The reason I mentioned the program that has just been approved in Timiskaming and the one that is being developed in Wellington—we have been closely involved in it—is that it is an attempt to put together the strengths of a local community through a chamber of commerce, its willingness to seek out and make available on a regular basis apprenticeship opportunities on the one hand and, on the other, the willingness of the school board to adapt a program sufficiently that there can be a move through to the achievement of both.

If I could give you an example, youngsters come into grades 9 and 10 and work off a number of credits, about 12. Then they will spend three

more years involved in programming in the secondary school and also working in the apprenticeship setting: two days a week in the school, three in the apprenticeship setting. At the end of that time, they will have an opportunity to go to the local community college and the worksite to complete in one year the rest of their apprenticeship. So it guarantees both the apprenticeship placement and the opportunity to complete a secondary school diploma. That can happen only if there is a very close tie between the school and the business industry of a local community and they keep that commitment true, as well as in co-operation with the college of applied arts and technology.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: And the unions involved, because most apprenticeships are unionized.

How many schools are there in that situation in the province now?

Ms. Roy: These are two new programs that we have just been involved in developing with the boards, and I imagine others are going to find it very appealing and will also look to variations on it.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: As far as we know, there are only two schools that are doing this in the entire province.

Ms. Roy: That is right. It is brand-new.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is not something that is new to be talked about, frankly. It is something which has been talked about for a long, long time.

Ms. Roy: No, it is not, but putting it into place is new.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Whatever happened to the program a few years ago where credits in the apprenticeship programs were going to be given for hours at school? That was the new approach a few years ago that everybody talked about.

Ms. Roy: Was that the linkage program?

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Yes.

Ms. Roy: It is still there and it is still in place. Many students take credits at secondary school that are also applicable to their linkage record book towards the apprenticeship. The program in the school must include within it the items that have been cleared with the apprenticeship group.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Maybe when you are getting some of the statistics on the couple of programs that you were talking to Mr. Johnston about, we can get an idea of how many students have actually taken advantage of the linkage program.

Ms. Roy: Yes.

Mr. Jackson: I have a question on the apprenticeship pilot projects you referred to. To what extent, in your evaluation of those programs, did you determine that there would be consistency carried through at the post-secondary level? There are too many examples to enumerate right now of cancelled apprenticeship programs in the second and third years in community colleges in this province.

I get nervous when the secondary school system develops and leads a student into a program in which some other ministry at the other end will now be in control of his destiny. To what degree is the linkage strengthened between the two ministries to ensure that that phenomenon does not occur?

Ms. Roy: When we were involved in the preliminary discussions on both of these proposals, we ensured that the Ministry of Skills Development was also involved. I am sorry. I meant to mention that.

Mr. Jackson: Is it involved? I asked you about guarantees. The Ministry of Skills Development has been cancelling apprenticeship programs all over this province.

Ms. Roy: All I can tell you is that there were three key concerns: first, to ensure that the diploma would be possible under this arrangement; second, that the apprenticeship sites would be available, and this has been guaranteed through the chamber of commerce, and third, that the completion of the apprenticeship would be available through the local community college. That is part of the agreement appearing at the moment. I think that is as much of a guarantee we can have at this time. That is what we sought.

1100

Madam Chairman: Mr. Johnston, did you have any other questions at this time?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Lots more questions and they are all to do with trying to get some statistical information, if I can. Let's stick with OSIS for a second. How many students in the province have fast-tracked by year? Do you know?

Mr. Beavor: The question I asked Ms. Roy was, "Do we think it is a percentage or do we have information on it?" The thought is that it is approximately 25 per cent, but there is no specific provincial information on the number of students who have fast-tracked and graduated this past June by taking their 30 credits in four years.

In my personal experience, most children going through the fast track tend to take four and a half years as opposed to the four. I do not believe that information is available to us at this time either, but I know we are anticipating getting that information. We would be most happy to provide it when it is available.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: So there is still a grade 13. It is just a smaller grade 13 these days, a happy or shorter grade 13, or whatever. A lot of people are very confused out there about whether it still exists or not. I understand the credit system, but it seems they all take over four and one half years, or most of them do. I guess there still is a grade 13.

Mr. Beer: Can I just jump in on one little aspect there, as we go on the statistical run? I think it might be interesting to know more clearly the four and a half versus the four. I am surprised, I must say, by the statistic of 25 per cent which seems to me high in terms of what I thought I understood to be the situation.

Is it perhaps that 25 is kind of the four and one half? I thought the four-year figure would be much lower. I would have been surprised if it was over 10 per cent. I may be all wet on that, and maybe what we need is just simply to get the statistics. I think that does make a difference in looking at how that has developed.

Ms. Roy: There have always been a number of students who have completed a program in four years or a little over four years. That did increase slightly, but not as much as some people had originally predicted.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Is this because they were doing it before because semestering allowed them to do that? You gave all the other rationalizations about why semestering was brought in. It always struck me that it was brought in so that quicker kids could get through the system quicker. Is that why we are not seeing a large change in those numbers with OSIS, because 75 per cent of the schools are already semestered anyway? The fast-track kid can already take that route and come out in about four and a half years.

Ms. Roy: I think there are a number of reasons. At first there was a great deal of publicity to the idea of fast-track and jet-stream. A number of us were a little concerned about that. It appeared there was a feeling that faster through was necessarily better. Many of the youngsters and their parents seemed to feel that was a way of ensuring entrance to a university. In discussing it with people at the universities,

many of them were very quick to point out that they were looking for students with a good background to enter those programs.

I am just talking about the youngsters who go to university. I know it is a very small proportion of our student body, but once the universities began to send information back to the secondary schools that they were not necessarily looking for the person who went through in four years, that seemed to take off a lot of the pressure. Many students want to have a broader program with greater variety. That is why we feel for most students it will be four and one half years, for some five, and for some four.

Mr. Beevor: I was just going to add that I think, too, parents are not necessarily all that enthusiastic in many cases about rushing their children through secondary school. They see no need to hurry that process and want their child to have the broadest possible education. So I think there is an issue there in terms of parents' relationships with children and perhaps not wanting to rush as much as the program might allow the child.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I will just ask two other statistical questions and then I will come back to my numbers questions again. What stats do you have about that? You say that is a rough percentage you are working on. What is it based on? What stats can you give the committee that we can have a look at?

Ms. Roy: What we will be able to do is to give you the data. I do not know if we will be able to get the February—perhaps June, but that is pretty quick. We will see how much we can get. It just depends upon how far it is through our system.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Whatever you have would be fascinating to see. One of the things that has interested me, for instance, which ties in with what Mr. Jackson and Mr. Beer were asking about, is the scene going to community college these days. I am wondering if there is a change in the academic background of the student who is now going to community college after the changes, dropping tech courses and things like that, than there was before OSIS. I wonder if you have any information on that in terms of what the average graduate out of high school who goes to community college goes in with now, as compared to what he went in with before OSIS. That would be fascinating to see, just to see whether it is speculative.

I would also be interested in any stats you have around the number of people who graduate from the system to go to post-secondary who pick up basic courses. You hear horror stories all the time

about people taking that one basic health course, a course in health studies or whatever the term is, and they take it at the basic level and then they do not take health again all the way through high school and go on to university. We are talking now about bringing AIDS and all sorts of health-related things into the curriculum, and yet it is very possible a student may take only that one very small, minimal involvement.

Do you have any idea about what the pickup rate is on courses like health and how many people are taking basic as compared with advanced studies in these things and taking only the minimum requirement rather than, hopefully, fitting into our broad guideline for education, which is to make all our students healthy and fit and aware, as the guidelines say? Do you have any stats on that kind of thing?

Ms. Roy: We will have some data, but they will not be as detailed as you are hoping for, I think. For one reason, we are just now putting into place a very thorough database related to each student in the province, but it does not have the earlier information in it. We do have some on the breakdown of students at the basic, general and advanced levels, but of course in many cases they are data on courses that were evolved at the school without the assistance of the new guidelines that are just reaching them now. It will mean more in a year or two, but we will look and see what we can bring over.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The last thing I will ask on semestering, and then I will leave it to other members and come back in on some of the other questions later, is what you alluded to very briefly. Although there seems to be some success in terms of some subject areas, linguistics seems to be a problem if there are major gaps in terms of when to take them up in terms of space. What statistical information do you have there? I have only ever heard the anecdotal kind of reference to it that you were mentioning today. How serious a problem is this around the province and what is being done about it?

Ms. Roy: We do not have statistical information on that. What we do have are the perceptions of teachers of those disciplines who have concern about it. We do not have provincial data on it, but it is an area we are going to be looking at.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I will come back at some time.

Mr. Jackson: Has no board ever made a presentation to you with respect to its concerns in this area? I know several boards have monitored that issue. I know it was over four years ago when

I was sitting as a trustee, with Mr. Beevor as my director at the same table, and we oft-times examined shifts in curriculum because it had staffing implications, and specialties.

We were losing technical teachers or retraining technical teachers and we heard a lot of complaints from English teachers as well. We had had a modest database, but we were identifying the problem very, very early. Have you not had a board that has written to you with concern, with statistics stating that this is a trend it is disturbed about?

Ms. Roy: A trend relating to tech or to semestering? I am sorry; I do not know which you meant.

Mr. Jackson: Mr. Johnston's question about language gaps. I think he is referring to a student going a year and a half without taking English or French and to what extent that helps his or her communications skills in either of Canada's official languages. Those are the kinds of issues which have been raised anecdotally, as well as the technical ones and physical education. They seem to be the major ones that always surface.

1110

Mr. Beevor: Certainly, local boards have that information in some cases and have been gathering it, especially in the tech area, because it has been such a crucial problem related to the numbers of student credits that are available for young children. With regard to the languages, I just checked with Ms. Roy and she is not aware of anything coming into the ministry relative to concern from a board on semestering and the distance between taking a credit in language and then not having it again for a period of time.

Mr. Jackson: Final supplementary: Within the ministry, you have course specialists, coordinators, on staff. You have a head of language arts. It is a whole division of your ministry. Surely, if you were to check with that coordinator, you would be able to determine if he is aware of any review projects internally. That is the normal course of affairs within the ministry, to be aware of the kinds of monitoring which has been going on within a specific board. Whether it has been endorsed by you or not is not the issue here. It is whether the concern is being flagged and some leadership, analysis, is being performed in a given board.

Ms. Roy: Yes, and certainly we will look for that.

Mr. Jackson: I am simply asking you to ask the people who would know, since you have indicated you are not aware.

Ms. Roy: I know we have not done any.

Madam Chairman: I believe Mr. Johnston is going to waive his right to further questions till the end in a very egalitarian effort to let the other members in. I am not sure he asked any questions in between the supplementaries, but he was very gracious to allow other people in.

Mr. Beer: What did you do?

Madam Chairman: He set a dangerous precedent.

I notice Mr. Lipischak is here from the ministry taking notes, so I assume we would have access to any statistics you do have. The committee looks forward to receiving those.

Mrs. O'Neill: Before I place my question, I would just like to say that I had the privilege a couple of weeks ago of going to Central Technical School, which is quite close to this building, as you know, spending the afternoon there discussing the programs that are in that school. It was awesome; that is the best word I can use. I had a person with me who was visiting from another country and she was also very favourably impressed.

There may not be as formal programs as have been described here regarding the apprenticeship program, but there certainly is an awful lot of work going on with businesses and industries in this community and Central Tech. The shops there are certainly receiving a lot of support, even acquisition support, and co-operation, with management and students often going out two to three days a week into the workforce. I recommend highly to anyone just to step a couple of streets over and take a good look.

I thought I should mention, regarding the fast-tracking, that one of the other reasons fast-tracking has become popular, of course, is that many boards are doing a lot of summer reach-ahead programs. Some people actually plan from grade 9 on that they want to do fast-tracking. But I agree that 25 per cent may be a bit of a generous estimate and I would like the data on that.

Now for my question: Mrs. Hogan brought forward a point regarding the entrance into grade 9. I feel, from a politician's point of view, that is often a place where we would like to have more information on what is possible and how involved parents are. You stated that when a student enters, he has up to a month to change his direction or to change courses, course levels.

Mrs. Hogan: They can do it after that in fact, but they are usually encouraged to stay with what they started with for at least a month to find out

how it is going. The school would probably be less enthusiastic to start switching before that time.

Mrs. O'Neill: Okay. When I heard you mention that, I wondered if you would be kind enough to tell us as a committee, and certainly for the record, what actually goes on in that transition period to help people get into the right program in grade 9 and what kind of bridges we make between grade 8 and grade 9.

The parents have to sign an option sheet, many of them, especially if it is their first child entering high school. They have no experience in this area. Then, of course, we have the people who have children with exceptionalities, strengths or weaknesses. I am wondering if you could give us a bit of a clue. I know this is an overlapping responsibility between the two of you. I thought you handled that quite well this morning.

Mrs. Hogan: I will talk a little about grades 7 and 8 and beforehand, and then Ms. Roy can talk about grade 9. Basically, at grade 7 and even before that, careers start to be talked about; the future starts to be talked about. Children are encouraged to start to identify where their interests are and things they think they would be interested in doing and taking because in grade 9, really, there is a lot of exploration, and so they are got ready for that.

The emphasis, certainly in grades 7 and 8, with the parents, is helping the parents and the child understand what is possible in terms of the secondary school, what is required in terms of credits and—I guess one way of putting it would be—what you have to be careful of, so that you do not close any doors to the future when you make your selection and the kinds of things to keep in mind in making the selection.

Very often the secondary school which is going to be receiving the pupils sets up a liaison with the elementary school and guidance people and others go back and forth, talking to the children who will be coming into that secondary school. There are, of course, program outlines. There is a great deal done in guidance work in grades 7 and 8 in the elementary school itself to help in decision-making.

As the child moves forward, as I mentioned, the teacher and the principal are the ones who recommend the kinds of course levels the child might register for. Very often, as Ms. Roy said, it is not all general, it is not all advanced; it has some of each, depending on what the topic is, what their background in that topic is and the idea of what their success might be.

If the child is not promoted per se from grade 8, the secondary school principal, as I said, can still receive that child. That would be, again, a decision made after talking to parents and teachers and weighing a lot of other things besides just the academic success. The secondary school principal would have the option, then, of providing certain help in certain situations for the student coming in.

Ms. Roy: There is frequently quite a bit of visiting back and forth, either people from the secondary school visiting around with the elementary schools or the youngsters actually visiting the secondary school before they come full-time, so it is not such a surprise or so large in appearance when they arrive in September. Many boards and secondary schools provide pamphlets and brochures that say, "Welcome to the school," and try to put into language the young student will be comfortable with what the various options are. Of course, as Mrs. Hogan mentioned, the option sheet is signed by the parent, with the youngster being aware of it, at least until the student is 18 years old at the age of majority, when the student signs it himself or herself.

One of the comments Mrs. Hogan made had to do with transition courses. Even though a youngster has selected a particular program at one of the three levels, if either partway through the year he is quite far through the year, or in second year wants to move to a different level in the same course but the next year up, many schools are providing transition courses of short duration to do the catch-up and understandings that are required.

If a youngster, for example, went from a general level grade 9 mathematics program and in grade 10 wanted to move into the advanced, there would be an opportunity. It might be provided in the summer or right at the beginning of the year—the short transition program—to make that step more comfortable with a greater chance of success.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: How common is that?

Ms. Roy: How common are the transition courses? I would say we are just getting to understand how effective they can be. They are available in some places and often it is done by a teacher working for a while directly with the student.

Mrs. O'Neill: May I just have the supplementary, I guess, on it? Are you building in supports in the guidelines to help teachers project all of these new things to the parents, and to the students, of course? It is a very mundane

question, but rather basic. I presume in the transition from grade 8 to grade 9 the parents have to have a lot of support and a lot of information.

Ms. Roy: Yes.

Mrs. O'Neill: Is that built into your writing teams, that aspect of it?

Ms. Roy: Perhaps I could start to answer and Mrs. Hogan might pick up on it. One of the difficulties we have with our guidelines is, should they be large or should they be small? We have tried to be quite clear about the outcomes. We have tried to be quite clear about the descriptor of what is intended. That information is there for teachers and principals to use when they are developing their own brochures or statements for their schools. Mrs. Hogan, do you want to pick up on that?

1120

Mrs. Hogan: Ms. Roy's branch has taken the leadership in presenting a new videotape that will be issued this year. It is called *Life After Eight*. It talks about the decisions that parents and kids go through and how they get to those. The idea is that there will be a guidebook going out with it to help teachers anticipate questions and to know what kind of information people are really interested in. A lot of parents are very anxious that this is it, and if they do not sign the form for the right things now, that child might be boxed for the rest of his or her life.

That is not necessarily so. Ms. Roy and her people are trying more to work against that happening in the second year. So things of that nature are being produced by both of us more and more in terms of something the teacher can opt into immediately to get some views of what the best way is to approach something with the parents.

Mr. Mahoney: Just a little bit on what Mr. Cooke said about how common it is. Are there criteria in place by which perhaps a teacher would recommend that a student move from a general to an advanced at a particular stage in the year? Are there policies that they can follow?

Ms. Roy: Within the guidelines? No, those are not specified in the guidelines. What we have is a quite thorough and clear descriptor of the content in the sense of knowledge, skills and attitudes for each of the three levels. It would be up to the school to decide how it would suggest that transition and, looking at the program in the school, how that would be possible.

In one of our guidelines, for science, we have said that there is some content similarity in

courses at each of the three levels. It might be wise at a school to put the similar content at the beginning of the year, although there are variations in the understandings expected. Say after a month or so a student is being very successful and highly interested and wants to pursue that at a more senior level, a different level, he or she can; or if there are some difficulties and the interest level is not that high, it would be possible to move to a different level. I think both of those things are part of it—the success of it and the desire to pursue it at a particular level.

Mr. Mahoney: My concern is that we all tend to seek a certain comfort level in whatever we are doing. If a student is achieving better-than-average marks at the general level, perhaps that student should be pushed a little bit, whereas the student may not want to be due to that comfort level that has been achieved.

I do not hear you saying that there is a particular point if the student reaches a certain percentage in his or her marks or something of that nature, or if the teacher really sees that the student can do much better than he or she is doing. I do not see, in what you are saying to me, an opportunity for the teacher to perhaps recommend strongly that the student move up a level.

Ms. Roy: My guess would be that that would happen very frequently at the local school. That would be a decision involving the student and the parent in discussion with the teacher and perhaps the guidance people.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I think we really do need some statistics on this. Can we have a list of the schools where there are transitional programs? Is that possible to get so we have some idea how seriously it is to be taken? Because if you do not want streaming to be dead-ending, then clearly there should be an emphasis on this, not just a smattering of these programs. So if we can get an idea who is playing the game in this fashion at the moment, that would be useful.

Madam Chairman: That is duly noted by the Ministry of Education.

Mr. Jackson: Mr. Beevor, this is the start of the second segment of a major marathon session for this committee. Today we start five weeks, maybe six weeks, of examining how we organize our schools. In what I have heard in the last hour and a half from your ministry we have received basically a report card on the subject areas but we have not received any grading from you. We do not get a sense—when I look to the teacher

comments, as it were, they are not giving me an indication at all that—

Mr. D. S. Cooke: These are the orals.

Mr. Jackson: These are the orals. All right. I will rate them later, but at the moment I would like to get a clearer sense from you in terms of semestering and streaming and some statements about curriculum guidelines. I would like to have heard from you, for example, that we need more of this clearly or we are getting too much of this. Are we asking too much to get those kinds of clear enunciated ideas from the ministry?

You have been monitoring OSIS. There is a whole host of problems with semestering, whether Mr. Radwanski disagrees with semestering or whether a group of schools that currently are nonsemestered continue to disagree with semestering. You talk about continuing to evaluate, that that pleases you very much, yet we are not seeing a lot of statistical data to follow with that kind of review. Are we expecting too much to ask you to give us some direction on streaming, on semestering, grade promotion?

Mr. Beevor: Perhaps I could respond first, Mr. Jackson, and Ms. Roy and Mrs. Hogan may wish to add.

I do not think it is too much to expect us to provide you with information which would be perhaps more data-driven than what we have provided you with this morning. I think the difficulty ministry personnel have is guessing the kind of information you as an individual might ask for at any moment. We are quite prepared to go back and see around the questions you have asked and the information you provided to make every effort to provide that for you. Maybe at that time there will be other information you would wish us to get for you and we would be most happy to get that as well.

I think one of the things happening in the province around OSIS, of course, is how recent it is and the amount of time in which boards are struggling with trying to cope with new guideline implementation, as well as a variety of selections of students who have made curriculum choices which are theirs to make under present policy. I am not at all surprised if perhaps the data you had requested are not available at our fingertips. We will make every effort to try to get that for you based on the questions you have asked us this morning.

Mr. Jackson: I am trying to go one step further. You do have the data in some form. You have had an opportunity to analyse them. I was looking for something a little more clear—I guess we should be waiting until your ministry

responds to the Radwanski report, because he seems to have put in focus several of these challenging issues and the minister has assured us that he will be responding to the claims. Maybe we could get into some of those briefly.

On semestering, I am surprised to hear it is 75 per cent of classes. It is my understanding that when semestering was first envisaged in this province, there was an agreement, whether written or not, that at least one secondary school in each jurisdiction would remain nonsemestered for a variety of reasons with which you are familiar: the transfer of students from other jurisdictions who are coming from nonsemestered; how you fit them into their program; the high risk of that year or that semester for a student who cannot fit the program. Is that policy still in effect and to what degree, if any, has the ministry been monitoring that to ensure that?

Mr. Beevor: I think it is a consensus here that we have never heard of that policy. Certainly, as a director of education I was never aware of that policy. The organization of schools under the Education Act is the responsibility, as you well know, of the board and its schools. I am not aware of any policy that dictated that a school board keep one of its schools nonsemestered.

Mr. Jackson: What do we do with a student who comes in from Burlington–Nelson High School, for example—and then goes into Mississauga to a semestered school, where they do not have a nonsemestered school? What does this student do, who now has to move from taking three or four programs to taking six or seven? How do we ensure that that student's academic period is not disrupted so badly that he loses a year or half a year?

1130

Mr. Beevor: I have to speak personally on some of these questions, but certainly that option has been made available, using the example of Burlington, although it is under discussion at this moment. Other school boards, I am sure, would make every effort to accommodate those. I do not know that there is any school board in Ontario that has every one of its schools semestered. I am just not party to that information. Ms. Roy may know that. She is shaking her head that she does not. I think most boards would have an option available for those kids, but we cannot speak in terms of any statistical data.

Mr. Jackson: Now I am hearing that we do not have a policy, but you think it is a good policy that at least one school in every school board be a semestered school.

Mr. Beevor: No, I am not saying that. I just assume that boards of education would have options available for those children.

Mr. Jackson: Further, has there been any discussion of the fact that OSIS organized this four-and-a-half-year system, which is more prevalent? I agree with Mr. Beer. I consider that statistic high, and when you consider that is based on 75 schools, the statistic is actually even higher in terms of its percentage of kids.

Where is the linkage with universities and community colleges for students? Is the promise of semestering that basically you have a system unload a fast-track student out of an academic institution, a high school, in February to sit around until September in order to begin his post-secondary experience? Has there been linkage with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities system in order to help that gap, or is there a presumption that all students going to post-secondary schools need that extra seven months to pay for their tuition? Why did that happen and why are we not doing anything about it?

Ms. Roy: Why it happened is that many school boards made decisions that, for a variety of reasons, for many of their schools, it seemed better to be semestered for some of the reasons we have mentioned, and many students seem to prefer to be in a semestered school. That was one of the realities.

Mr. Jackson: Yes. I am not disagreeing with the reality of what has happened. I am saying once they walk out the door in February, they now sit around for seven or eight months before they can get into post-secondary education. Somehow we have broadened the gap from what was the normal summer, which I had, because I was in a nonsemestered school. I went to university in September, following June graduation. Do we know whether many of the students, in that period of time, have decided not to go to post-secondary school because they have had eight months to think about it?

I do not wish to focus on the question. My real question here is, why is there a breakdown among colleges and universities in terms of the pickup of those students? If they do fast-track for four years—which is very rare; we know it is complicated and very hard to do—there is no problem, the system meshes. They just do it in four years. But in four and a half, there is this huge gap.

Ms. Roy: It is not a question that is unaddressed. During the past three years, we have been working rather closely with people at

the Council of Ontario Universities, and this is one of the issues that has come up. Frequently, in meetings with the registrars from the various universities, it is an issue that is discussed a lot. A number of the universities are thinking about the possibility of having some sort of entry post-Christmas, if you wish, February. A couple have moved in that direction and are experimenting with it.

In reference to the colleges, we have had the same sort of discussion. It has intensified more over the last year and a half. We have had a liaison person, Graham Collins, working with us very closely, and he is taking that issue back to the colleges for further consideration. There are apparently all sorts of difficulties about it but, if the students are going to be available, I hope you will put that question to the representatives who will be here from either the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario or the colleges in other ways or the Council of Ontario Universities or individual universities, because it is a very important issue for the education of youngsters.

Some students say they rather like having that period of time, not only to work, hopefully, and gather some money, but also as a time to assess where they are and what they want to be doing. But many would prefer to continue with their education immediately if they are going to a post-secondary institution. It is an issue that is under a great deal of discussion.

Mr. Jackson: Last Thursday, I spent the morning with a parent who recently lost her son in a drug-related accident. The minister had made his announcement. I am talking about Mrs. Hayward, Benji Hayward's mother.

She made a very compelling argument on the way we structure our classes, OSIS in particular. She made some very compelling arguments about her son getting only one unit of physical education, health, family studies, that whole bundle of programs, during his four- or five-year high school experience. I am hearing this more and more from a variety of groups, many of whom are on our docket.

To what extent is the ministry being a little more proactive in terms of an OSIS review which would free up that time? I know you are constantly re-examining your mandatory courses, but we are not getting any changes; we are getting examination of them. When are we going to see something more significant?

Not to suggest we did not appreciate the minister's announcement two weeks ago, but clearly there was a gap in terms of the secondary

school commitment in his announcement, and one of the areas that comes screaming forward is the attention towards a student's physical and social wellbeing and how the school can help in that area.

Ms. Roy: In reference to the specific question of the number of mandatory credits in physical and health education, that certainly will be one of the items discussed in the review that will begin this year. For a student to be aware of the impact on self of the abuse of drugs is a part of the health education program. It is also an area that can come under discussion within the science program and other areas. Very definitely, I agree with you, it is an area we do have to look at to see what we can be doing that will be more effective.

In reference to the minister's recent announcement related to drug education, we are now looking at ways in which we can provide greater assistance to teachers as they try to increase the drug education program in the schools, and even beyond that, how we can find more effective ways to have greater co-operation between those in the school and those in the full community, not just parents, to better understand the terrible impact this can have on young people and older ones.

Mr. Mahoney: Many of the questions have been asked, of course, and I know some of the statistics are going to be helpful to us when we get them, but I would like to ask one fairly straightforward question on the streaming issue.

It seems the exceptional students, if they are gifted, are looked after in gifted programs. If they are learning-disabled, they are looked after in learning-disabled programs. Almost akin to our tax system, the middle person tends to get lost in the shuffle at times.

I frankly think that streaming, for a vast majority of young people, tends to be for life in one direction or another. If we really want parental involvement, do you feel that partway through grade 8, when the child is around 12 years old, and particularly in the case of working parents, with both parents working or single-parent families, where there is an awful lot of pressure on the family, we are really being realistic with that average student, that middle student, to expect such a critical decision on streaming to be done at such an early age?

1140

Mr. Beevor: That is an excellent question. I think it has a lot of complexities and I wish I could give you a straight answer to it. The schools, the school staff and the guidance counsellors obviously will spend a great deal of

time trying to help that child and his parents make the decision which is appropriate for him both in the secondary school and what that may lead to. I tend to agree with you that once that decision has been made it tends to lock the child in. I think there are few examples where the child actually moves out of that into an advanced-level program.

There are reviews presently going on in your work in what is probably one of the most critical areas you will have to face. I know that teachers' federations as well as other interested groups are presently coming forward with their documents which describe their feelings, thoughts and ideas on that. I think that will all be helpful to come to some decision which I think probably is one of the most important ones this ministry and others will have to grapple with over the next few months and possibly years.

Mr. Mahoney: Should we be looking, as a ministry and as a government, at perhaps putting in place policies that would allow for the transition from either basic to general or general to advanced with some regular reviews to make it well known? I have had some personal experience with one of my own children who did move from the general to advanced, but it was not well known to him, myself or my wife that that transition could be accomplished. In fact, we were somewhat resigned to the fact that he was going to have to forgo the opportunity to move to advanced even though he was doing very well in the general. With some digging and some prodding and a substantial amount of pushing, I might add—my wife is very pushy; I am not—we managed to effect the transition and he is now in the advanced.

I do not think it is common. As Mr. Cooke asked, "Is it common?" I do not think it is common. In fact, it required a change of schools for that transition to take place. I just wonder why we should not be looking at making that transition more common, more available and to encourage students to make the transition wherever a teacher or parent or the student himself or herself sees an opportunity to do that. Rather than leaving it to local boards, should it not be ministry policy?

Mr. Beevor: I would respond that I think that is what this is all about, to come to some decision as to what is appropriate in terms of provincial policy. At this moment in time it is a local board decision and perhaps that may indeed be an outcome of your deliberations and deliberations that are going on at the ministry at the present time.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: What is the premise upon which that present policy, which is so entrenched in our thinking—40 years, as you say, with a brief hiatus—which is streaming at such an early age, is based? Why is it that it is done the way it is? Can you refer us to either pedagogy or other things we should be looking at that make that rational? I have never seen anything myself which says that that is when it should be done. Certainly, other societies do it, some earlier, some later. What is ours based on? Can you refer us to even some background information that may be given to our research officer or whatever to disseminate to us so we can have a look at that? I have not got a clue.

Ms. Roy: One of the premises the members of the writing teams were working on—it is very idealistic but it was truly what they were trying to achieve—was to develop courses at each of the three levels in most cases which had outcomes but which would provide opportunity for success, because it is so important that students be successful. Our hope is that the opportunity for the transition program will be picked up by more schools; that is why it was written into the program. If something can be done to enable that to happen more frequently, I certainly would be very pleased to be involved in that.

Mr. Mahoney: I have another question on the semestering issue. I think we all probably experienced the difficulty of staying awake in 40-minute periods when we went through school from time to time.

Mr. Beer: Did you have that problem?

Mr. Mahoney: I had it from time to time. I have it from time to time in certain committees—not this one.

Is it realistic? I quite agree with Mr. Johnston's concern that a student may go for a year or a year and a half without taking English or some other subject that is pretty fundamental to life. Is it realistic that we should expect students to sit through 60- and 80-minute periods on a particular subject; or should we be looking at perhaps shorter periods with a broader number of subjects, a broader range, to create a little more interest? I frankly wonder how they do it. How do they sit through 80 minutes of one subject? I think it would be brutal.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Like two hours in a committee meeting.

Mr. Mahoney: That is right.

Mr. Beevor: I think the biggest source of data for that information is children and teachers who have to go through it. Certainly, having children

in the secondary school panel, I find it is not a complaint I get at home, having my son and my daughter talk about the length of time in courses.

I think the underlying question that is up for debate—and I am pleased to be part of it—is, do we stream too early and is there something we should be doing to delay that decision a little later? Whether it is later until the end of grade 10 or the end of grade 9 or the end of grade 11, I think that debate is ongoing. I think that is indeed one of the major issues that has to be decided.

Mr. Mahoney: Yes, that is the streaming issue. I am really talking, with respect, about the semestering issue. I wonder and often have wondered if semestering is not more a benefit for the people who work in the system—the administrators and the teachers—than for the student. I am not saying it is. I am asking the question to put the item on the table for some discussion.

It seems to me it might be more controllable. You may be able to manage the classrooms better and the administration of the actual system better. But is it beneficial for a 15- or 16-year-old child to be sitting through an 80-minute period on one particular subject? Are you going to retain their attention?

Ms. Roy: I think it is entirely a matter of the teaching and learning techniques that go on during that 80-minute time span. Certainly, some of us can remember the frustrations of attempting to go through a laboratory experiment, understand what we were doing, talk to some of our peers about what we were doing, make our notes and get it all done in 35 minutes. It was very difficult. That is one area in which there can be much more effective learning going on.

I think the same is true in almost any discipline. If you look at it from the idea of how we can best use the 80 minutes, recognizing that there are peaks and levels in everybody's attention span, you try to understand that with the youngsters you happen to be working with. A lecture for 80 minutes? Forget it. A lecture for 25 minutes is a bit long too.

Mr. Beevor: I think in the schools that have moved to semestering over the years, that has probably been the most critical debate that went on in the staff room—the length of time. What about those subjects that we feel need sequential time? How we are going to change our methodology appropriate to the more teaching time that is available?

I must say to you that I have had a personal experience where teachers have turned that down. So I do not see the priority for teachers to debate that issue of, "How is it best for me?" I

think they are really concerned about the learning for children. There is a big concern in most schools when they move towards a semestering system as to what is going to happen.

Mr. Mahoney: I guess it could be seen in many cases to be even more difficult for the teachers because they have to be able to try to maintain that attention for 80 minutes.

Mr. Jackson: In fairness, do not forget that it has a considerable impact on the amount of planning time that is available to teachers when you move from a nonsemestered school to a semestered school, whether it is in the collective agreement or not.

The way you organize schools, you get a lunch, which is now 80 minutes long instead of 45 in a nonsemester situation. You get planning time that now fills the larger period as opposed to the smaller period. The corollary is that the students now get 85-minute breaks in a day, so it is possible for a student or a teacher to have a class, a break, a lunch, another class and another class after that. So there are other implications. There is another side to that in terms of what this total school day looks like, and any discussion on that should be balanced to put all those in perspective.

1150

Mr. D. S. Cooke: We might also recall that one of the groups we had in the summer talked about semestering and the effects on continuing education and access to the school system for adults. We have talked about the kids. If schools are to be accessible to the community, there should be some evaluation of semestering and its impact on adults.

Mr. Beer: There are many areas that you have brought up, and we could probably spend a lot more time in exploring them. Just on this last issue and not to go into it, I think all of us—whether through our own experiences as parents, having been teachers in the school system or receiving complaints from or entering into discussions with constituents—are aware of that whole question of transition, kids at different levels who blossom later. At the secondary level, as a teacher, it always struck me that there were at times remarkable changes that happened to an adolescent between grades 11 and 12. I have had the experience Mr. Mahoney was talking about where you see a kid and suddenly something has happened. The pieces have fallen into place and you want very strongly to get that student into the advanced level or whatever the case might be.

As we examine that whole issue of the basic-general-advanced levels, wherever we go, undoubtedly, there will be some form of groupings at some point in time or other. We need to develop meaningful ways to ensure that the child who is able can go forward, as Mr. Mahoney suggests, looking for the kid who perhaps is drifting nicely at 75 per cent and could do better and should be challenged. I just leave you with that comment, because I think that is something of concern.

I would like to focus for a moment on teachers. If I might, to Mr. Beevor, I am aware you have just joined the provincial government. To any of us who have looked at educational programs and developments, that which your board has done over the years has been of great interest. I think I can speak on behalf of the board. I know it was also the trustees of Halton, but the province is the stronger now for having you here with us in the ministry.

The fact that you are so new to the ministry here at Queen's Park is why I want to put this question to you. In my family, we have tended to have a fair number of teachers at all levels. I would even dare to say that some of my best friends are teachers.

As we keep talking about the educational system and all of the things that we expect that system to do, not just academically but in virtually every area—social, cultural and athletic; we have heard some of them this morning, and I think it is good that we do pose those questions—I get very concerned, especially when I look at some of the elementary teachers who, by definition, are covering a broader program spectrum in terms of how they cope with the increasing demands, for example, the recent announcement of beefing up the drug education program. I suspect as the years go by that is going to move further down into the program. It requires tremendous sensitivity on the part of all teachers, but particularly elementary school teachers, to be able to discuss and deal with a number of these issues with the children.

As somebody who was directing a board, and in looking at the kinds of teacher-development programs and so on, do you have specific concerns about this? Is this something that historically seems to work out? Are we getting to the point where perhaps, as we develop programs, we really must ask ourselves, "Is this appropriate to be done in the school situation? Should this be done somewhere else?" Do we have to start saying to parents: "Look, remember, you have a role here. You can't just give it up

to the schools." What is your sense of where we are in our teacher development?

Mr. Beevor: I think one of the things we always have to concern ourselves with is the amount of expectations that we have of our schools and of our curriculum. There is no question about that. I think you are absolutely right when you say we should ask before we introduce a new program, "Is this the appropriate place in which it should go?"

No school system in Ontario that I am aware of has not worked very hard with in-service programs for its teachers. I think a very basic principle and a very basic value of providing the very best that you can is that if you improve the quality of teaching, you improve the quality of learning. Most school boards that I am aware of, including the three I have worked for, have always placed as a very high priority the development of its teachers and the implementation of new programs in attempting to provide the teachers with not only the time but also the financial resources upon which they can increase their expertise if a new expectation arises.

It is also probably no news to anybody that it is probably a chief complaint of teachers too, that expectations have risen over the years where at one time we knew exactly what society expected of us. As time has gone on, that has changed.

I think it is important for ministry staff, as we work with teachers and teachers' federations in implementing curriculum projects, that we do encourage time and resources to be spent on the in-service component. I think it is highly critical and highly important. Since I have been at the ministry for just a few days, it is certainly a discussion that I have been involved with at least three times over the last week in terms of programs that are being talked about.

Mr. Beer: As a follow-up to that, the other dilemma that I think always faces the system and teachers in particular is in the relationship with the parents. So often—not in all cases but in too many—the parents you really ought to be talking to or would like to see you do not see, whether it is at times for socioeconomic reasons or that they are simply not interested or that they are fearful somehow of coming into contact with the system and are not quite sure how to access it, how to deal with it. Again, I think that has come up in a number of cases in some of the questioning and I think we need to look carefully at the kinds of strategies we use.

Here we are talking not even so much at the school board level but really at the school level in terms of drawing parents in. We can go around

and there is school X which does a fabulous job and school Y which may be in the same town and does not. Sometimes, I suppose, that relates to the role of the principal, but there are often other factors as well. I think that would be another question, particularly as we move into some of these new programs.

In terms of what exists at the present time, that would be primarily the local board that is developing those, or what sorts of things does the ministry now do or what is it looking at in relation to the sort of school/family link?

Mr. Beevor: Perhaps we could start with Shannon and she could explain the elementary level.

Mrs. Hogan: In *The Formative Years*, in Education in the Primary and Junior Divisions, which supports it, and in many of the other resource documents for *The Formative Years*, we talk about the necessity to communicate with the home, to have the parents into the school. Not on formal come-and-see-the-school nights, but at other times when the classes are going on, the parents might be able to come in. The schools, too, based on some ideas they are given through the documents and ideas they develop themselves, make arrangements so that they can meet with parents at what would be, for those of my age, an unorthodox time.

When I taught, when I went to school, nobody really worried about shift workers and when they came and talked to the teacher or about parents who worked all day or that kind of thing. We sort of showed up at the given time in the morning or afternoon. I think that has changed now.

We are putting out a document. It is really based on multicultural and race equity ideas, but it is talking about how you make a child welcome into the school and how you make the parents feel welcome. The interesting part is that when you read it you can remove it very easily from any multicultural or racial setting to the kind of ways we should work with all parents. The school should be able to reach out and explain things, show things, discuss together what the concerns are, what the options are, those sorts of things.

I think we do some things in terms of encouraging. Boards certainly do some things and federations or their members do a lot of things in terms of ideas about that and how it might be done.

1200

Ms. Roy: We might want to talk about one of the new initiatives. It is really in its second year: the student retention and transition project. It has become very clear from the meetings held around

the province and the beginnings of research we have on the community how important it is that there be close ties back and forth between the community—the parents but the rest of the community as well—and the decisions related to program setting a tone in the school. It is key and it is an area in which I think we need to do a great deal more at the secondary schools.

If I could just pick up on your previous comment for a moment, both Mrs. Hogan and I have been involved in trying to augment the in-service opportunities available to teachers as they are asked to carry on with new things. I guess two would be the recent acquired immune deficiency syndrome activity we were involved in, and the in-service which was provided through TVOntario working with the materials we had produced, which was invaluable to the teachers, helping them feel more comfortable with a very difficult and terribly important topic.

Madam Chairman: Both Mr. Johnston and Mr. Jackson have indicated they would like a brief windup question. Just before we go to that, I would like to abuse my prerogative as chair and ask one of my own.

During our July hearings when we were looking at the philosophy and goals of education, a number of presenters focused on the fact that they felt there was an overcrowded curriculum, that the school was trying to be everything to everybody and that expectations were far too high. They felt it should be pared down, perhaps focusing more on some of the basics.

We asked the question a number of times: What would you eliminate? I am wondering if the teachers and the school boards are coming to the ministry with a similar attitude and complaint and if so, whether you are looking into this subject of whether the curriculum is indeed too crowded.

That was the easy question; now for the hard one.

Mrs. Hogan: Well, certainly from a point of view of going into curriculum renewal in the elementary school we are looking at it. You are right. We do get presentations. We do get letters. We do get people calling, who want something else added, usually.

When we talk about, "What would you drop?" or "What is this more important than?" very often there is nothing forthcoming. I guess part of it is in your definition of basics, because there is a lot more, as I mentioned earlier, than reading, writing, arithmetic and numbers in today's society. There is learning how to make decisions, learning how to use information, learning how to

get along in life, learning how to use ethics and moral judgements and those kinds of things.

It becomes very difficult to know what it is that should or should not be done or could be dropped. I do think one place where there is more happening is that there is more talk between the school and the home, and mostly on individual situations where they have built good bridges, about what the home responsibility is with respect to things like race relations, multiculturalism, drug education, that sort of thing. What the school does is augment it more fully.

That is one way of two sectors dealing with it, but it still does require a very great range, everything from family violence and ways of getting along in the family, what is acceptable behaviour, to trying to give young children some ideas about safety on the street, in the classroom, wherever they are. It is all considered by most people to be the kind of thing they want the teachers, the people who know the children, to approach and to work with, along with other topics. It is very difficult to cut anything out.

Madam Chairman: That was what we were finding when we asked that question. Very rarely could anybody say what they would eliminate. They basically said, "Well, it is your job and the Ministry of Education's job to decide what to eliminate." But it is very difficult.

Ms. Roy: I would pick up on just what you have said. Recently, we tried to cut back a little bit on some of the guideline renewals at the secondary level. In one area in which we did, we have had quite a bit of complaint about it. I suppose I should mention it.

In the French-as-a-second-language document—in all of our second languages—we said it should be possible for a student to graduate in four years, if that was the decision, recognizing that you have to make your program quite narrow. We felt it must be possible for a student taking a second language to move through the secondary school in a four-year time span. That meant there are programs at grades 9, 10 and 11, but then from the grade 11 advanced you move to the Ontario academic course. From the grade 11 general you can move to a grade 12 general. There were quite a few complaints about that.

We frequently hear from people who want more in the program, such as more physical and health education. We did have some success in looking at the whole history and contemporary studies area, cutting that back in the sense of the number of programs that can be offered in that area. But there are new basics now that we have an expectation will be a part of understanding and

socialization from the schools. We will just have to learn how to do it in shorter time periods, I suppose.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: A good lesson from the elementary panel, which you alluded to as happening, although I do not think it is happening at the secondary level very much at all, is holistic teaching, where you incorporate the various things throughout your whole curriculum. Then you do not have to worry about a new curriculum for AIDS. You work in a systematic way for incorporating it into the various things.

It would be interesting if you could name one biology, physics or chemistry teacher who incorporates AIDS discussion into his class at the high school level. I would be interested in giving this person a medal. I do not really think it takes place.

Ms. Roy: Some do.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: But that surely is the answer. It is not adding more curricula, more courses, more programs all the time.

Madam Chairman: Would you like to take up another line of questioning?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I have a series of things I would like some information on, so I would like to give these as notice to the ministry scribblers. This is what I want some statistics on, not just the anecdotal things.

I want to have an idea, if I might, of the latest that you have about the demographic figures around streaming. Who gets streamed where? I would really like that, whatever you are operating on, in terms of which kids, working-class families, etc., end up streamed and how.

I really would be interested to know their outcomes, especially any statistics you have on vocational schools or if people are streamed into vocational programs. What are the outcomes in terms of the dropout stuff that you hear so much about? So much of it is anecdotal, as we have had discussions in the past that did not seem to be based on anything in particular.

How many get jobs? Do we know any of those kinds of things? Where do they end up afterwards out of these programs? That kind of a thing on a statistical basis would be very interesting. I would be interested in a province-wide class size profile by grades. We would have an idea of what the range is out there so we could have an idea of how all of this integrates, if you have that.

I would be interested in knowing a little bit more about the specifics of ability groupings in the primary levels, just how that is done in various boards. What is the range of definition of

ability groupings? I would also like to have some idea, as a fallout from that, of how much segregation is taking place and how much integration is taking place within that concept of ability grouping, specifically within the elementary panel at the moment.

There seem to be boards which have gone entirely in the direction of having everybody in the same classroom, where possible, and adding supplementary aid there. There seems to be an awful lot which are still using withdrawal in ways which other boards will not even look at. I guess what I would like to have is some sort of a profile of that, so we would know what the real world is like out there, if that is at all possible.

I would like to have an idea of the early identification process and how that is being done in various parts of the province. Again, any statistical profile you have of that—who does it? who does not do it?—would be great.

How many junior kindergartens do we now have in the province? How many full-time, full-day kindergartens are there? Are there any left in the province? That kind of information about the early childhood stuff would be fascinating, just as a statistical base for us at this point.

What else did I want?

Mr. Jackson: Mr. Beevor thought he pushed a lot of paper in Halton; now he is here.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I would like to know about this common examination notion that you were raising. What was the result of that? You had this discussion. Have you collected any data on who used what and how closely similar these exams were, etc.? It would be very interesting to get information on the outcome of that.

1210

I am interested in promotion. You say some schools are involved in the notion of social promotion versus the retention of the child back. Can you give us a breakdown by board, or however you can do it, about what the reality of that is out there, rather than just being anecdotal again? What is the range of policies that seem to be out there by boards in interpreting this whole question of promotion and retention?

I find it fascinating, for instance, the notion that at the end of a division, you can be top, as I understand, within the division, so that if you are lucky and do well in grade 2 but you are bad in grade 3, you may get held back. I would like to know a little bit more about the rationale and how that works. It seems that on the face of it, initially it sounded like a good idea, but then I thought: "How does it work? If you do badly in the wrong

year, do you get held back? Is that the way it works?"

Mrs. Hogan: No, it is an amalgam. It is your teachers getting together and deciding what will happen in the various years.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: If we can see some stuff on how that is done, that would be very interesting. Again, I am interested in how this is done across the province. That is where I see your role in this, filtering information to the government—in this case, to us—which can tell us where gaps are, what the range is of how things are being dealt with out there so we can start to come to grips with notions about local autonomy versus province-wide standards and all of those kinds of things, as we look at it.

The last thing I wanted was parental involvement policies. It strikes me—and this comes down specifically around streaming, but it also has to do with kids with learning disabilities and that sort of thing—that there seems to be a real range of policy around the involvement of parents in these decisions. I was wondering if you have any material on that, any kind of a profile of what is happening across the province in terms of how parents are involved in the decisions around things like how they could get streamed or how they could get involved in identification and placement review committees in different parts of the province.

Have you done any work in gathering that kind of information? I will not be surprised or hurt if you do not have it. Just say, "That kind of information is, at this moment, only kept board by board, and we have this information about that board." That would be fine.

I just want to know what the real world is out there in terms of this kind of information, so that we can know whether we have to ask for more research to be done for ourselves over the next number of years or whether there are directions we will be suggesting to the ministry—that it start to develop this kind of a database in various areas.

From my perspective, that is what I was hoping to learn more about from you today, but we are always too stuck for time. Any information on those areas that you can get us I will be happy about, and any place you do not have it, if you could tell us why it is that you cannot get that, what the problems are in terms of bringing forward that kind of information, that would be useful to us.

Madam Chairman: I am sure that the ministry will endeavour very hard to get us the information about the real world. First of all,

they do not want to admit they do not have it but, second, I am sure that they want to keep in mind your very delicate constitution and they would not want to hurt you or crush your feelings, or all those other things you stated.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I seem pretty well adjusted after the summer but I could crumble at a moment's notice.

Mr. Beer: You have a lot of support around this table.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: For crumbling.

Mr. Mahoney: I cannot stand the suspense myself.

Mr. Jackson: I have two very quick questions. Back on semestering, Ms. Roy, when students in Ontario complete a course in June and they are deemed to be in jeopardy, they can go to summer school. What does a student do who is completing a course in a semester at school in February?

Ms. Roy: And they have a course or two that they want to pick up?

Mr. Jackson: They are in jeopardy and they could lose their course. Obviously we treat them differently. Do they pass or fail? Are we unable to give them assistance? Is it a double standard? Is it the luck of the draw if you pick an easy course in the first semester because you can get through it, but you take your tough courses that complete in June because you can always go to summer school?

Ms. Roy: I think there are a couple of options, perhaps three or four. One is that the school may be offering a program in the evenings that the student could join. There is the possibility of the student doing independent study in the school, working with the teacher; or there is the possibility of utilizing some of the materials perhaps from the independent learning centre. There are a number of options, depending upon what has been established within the school.

Mr. Jackson: But no summer school equivalency.

Ms. Roy: It would be very similar, but you are doing it in the evening or you are doing it privately, working with a teacher. It is just not called summer school.

Mr. Jackson: Then why do we not provide summer school in the summer instead of the other three options for students in June? They are clearly different experiences—that is all I am saying—and one is far more empirical in terms of examining the outcome and warranting that a student has achieved that level.

Ms. Roy: It should not be, if it is, because the program is still based upon the expectations of the guideline.

Mr. Jackson: I will leave that one out there.

My second question, very briefly, had to do with early childhood education. Like Mr. Johnston, I am cursed with a two-and-a-half-year-old who is reading avidly now and bugged me for three months to get a computer. I am very much concerned about the fact that she has to wait three years to get into school.

You are going to provide some statistics for Mr. Johnston with respect to entry points for junior kindergarten. I am very interested in entry points and the degree to which we are freeing up that terrible policy of the calendar-year entry point. I was a February baby and it was good that I was held back a year. I was the oldest kid in the class. My daughter is a March baby and her progress is quite considerable. I am concerned about her experience, and Halton does not have junior kindergarten.

Could you get to us, from your perspective, your concerns with respect to what point we allow children to enter the school system? There is clearly documented evidence that girls are better prepared to enter kindergarten than are boys. That has been documented very clearly. There are a lot of other issues at stake here, and I would like to know if the ministry is informally examining that policy, as we have uncovered that the ministry is informally examining the length of the school day, for example. It is not

something you broadcast but it is something we know you are examining. We would like to know if you are in fact examining that. That would help to guide us, if for no other reason than to make it one of the more important issues we look at in phase three.

I know early childhood education and drop-outs seem to be major issues for members of this committee. It is not that we want to demean everything that is in between; it is just that how a child enters the system and how a child exits are of immense concern to anybody in education.

That does not require a response, it is just to flag you that I would be interested in some written material on that.

Madam Chairman: I would like to thank the ministry representatives for coming before us today. You certainly have been very informative and I think it is a very good kickoff to our session on the educational process and the organization in Ontario.

Ms. Roy: Thank you for the opportunity.

Mr. Mahoney: Now you have six weeks of work to do.

Madam Chairman: That is right. Your homework is assigned.

I would ask all members to be back here sharply at two, since we intend to reconvene very promptly. Do not forget your exhibits.

The committee recessed at 12:19 p.m.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The committee resumed at 2:03 p.m. in room 151.

Madam Chairman: We will begin this afternoon's session of the select committee on education, as we continue to look at the organization of the education process in Ontario.

This afternoon, to start off, I am pleased to say that we have the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation with us. I would like to thank the group for consenting to change places with one of the other groups which was having difficulty with the time slot. We very much appreciate the fact that on short notice you came to give our first public presentation this afternoon.

The OSSTF—I will continue to call it that and then I will not have to remember all the words in the right order—is a well-known organization of our secondary teachers in Ontario. We very much look forward to your presentation. Please begin whenever you are ready.

Perhaps you could identify yourselves for the purposes of electronic Hansard. I should just let you know that we are being televised today, so you can wear your very best smiles. Please begin.

ONTARIO SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' FEDERATION

Mr. Head: My name is Jim Head, president of the OSSTF. On my left is Doris St. Amand, vice-president of educational services. On my far left is Bob Buckthorp, executive assistant for research. On my right is David Eaton, our general secretary.

It may please you to hear that I do not intend to read our brief nor do I intend to go through it on a line-by-line basis. Our delegation makes the assumption that the September 2 deadline gave you all ample time to read the document and that any other assumption would insult your intelligence. My opening remarks, however, cover the first two pages of our brief, and you may wish to follow along on those two pages. My comments are of a generic nature, but they do cover those first two pages; then I intend just to highlight a couple of other points.

We are pleased to be here today on behalf of not only 36,000 public secondary school teachers, but an additional 4,000 OSSTF members such as educational psychologists and psychometrists who provide educational support services.

We are the largest single group among the five affiliates of the Ontario Teachers' Federation. As OSSTF president, I know our members are committed professionals who would like to think of themselves as partners in the educational process in this province.

The timing of our presentation perhaps says something about why we have some reservations about the process the select committee appears to be following and about our role as partners. First, the opening phase of your hearings took place during the summer when many of the organizations involved in Ontario education were not meeting, ours included. Second, had we not submitted our completed brief by September 2, we would indeed not be allowed to be here today. Our original hearing date, as you are aware, was switched in order to accommodate the presentation by a private school group.

Finally, we find it ironic that we have been conducting ongoing educational research since the mid-1970s, more so than any similar group in Canada, with very little indication that the politicians who make key decisions affecting every classroom and every student in this province have understood, much less read, that research. You will find some of our research reflected in the five support documents accompanying our written presentation.

Our response to the Radwanski report praised some of its recommendations, but found in general that many of them offered simplistic structural and program delivery proposals to solve problems as complex and varied as the students in our schools.

Our publication, *Reducing the Dropout Rate*, was only the latest step in an ongoing examination of this educational issue. Some on this committee are probably aware from our earliest presentations that OSSTF was among the first to raise concerns about the dropout rate in Ontario schools and most particularly among students taking general level courses. However, we are pleased that our first recommendation in that document has been taken up by the Ministry of Education.

We are not flattered by the response to the extremely detailed presentation on special education which we made to the Ministry of Education in 1986. To date, we still have not had a response to that document. There was a white paper in between, and that white paper has disappeared as well. A great deal of thought and a great deal of

classroom input went into that document, but we see little indication that anyone has acted upon it.

One of the calls to our provincial office last week came from a nonplussed teacher who told us his class of 30 had just been increased by two trainable mentally retarded students. Not only does that teacher have no special training to assist TMR students, but he simply does not have the time to teach adequately at two entirely different levels. That is the reality of what is happening in classrooms while we continue to discuss special education at meetings like the one here today.

We are looking forward to the announcement of the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward) later this fall on technical education. While that is late in terms of implementation, this is a crucial area in terms of our students' futures. Our statistics and our research tell us that we already face a serious shortage of teachers in technical education with very little evidence that the Ministry of Colleges and Universities is doing very much about it.

1410

Teachers are certainly not being consulted in the way they should be. If we had been, the Futures program, which we are quite pleased about but which nevertheless causes severe problems, would not have been designed in its present format requiring student participants to attend the program on a 52-week continuous basis, ignoring the fact that those students are accustomed to breaks in the school year. It also ignores the fact that no such school to handle 52 continuous weeks at present exists in Ontario.

I could go on on other documents where we feel we have not been consulted in areas in which we think we have much to offer, such as the latest document which has just come out, the school-to-work transition guide, which is an excellent document but has no classroom teacher input at all, or the newest Ministry of Skills Development conference on literacy. Once again, we have been invited to the conference but none of the planning came from any classroom teachers.

Finally, I recommend Present Challenges, New Directions as a thoughtful document. It has already sparked considerable discussion across the province. Beginning in mid-October, our federation will be sponsoring forums across the entire province from Dryden to Quebec to get the input of teachers to a wide range of controversial issues such as streaming and curriculum.

We believe we have done our homework. We spent \$250,000 on the year-long process that led to the publication of *At What Cost* in 1976. Each year since then we have invested \$100,000 in educational research. Before we are through with

our forums and other research this winter and next spring we will have spent another \$100,000 on Present Challenges, New Directions. With or without recognition from the governments of the day or the Ministry of Education, the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation has been on the leading edge of educational research on this continent and therefore, I submit, in this world.

I wanted to say this to your committee at the beginning of our presentation, because the question of whether we are partners in the educational process is a moot point among classroom teachers. On the one hand, they are assured that they are; on the other hand, they see a hand-picked group such as the Premier's Council making key decisions affecting education without a single educator from the elementary or secondary panels among its members.

Last week, we read a great deal about the federal government's multi-million dollar program to combat illiteracy and along with it heard suggestions that schools were to blame for the problem. The teacher-bashing made good copy for two days but it also overlooked several realities. Illiteracy stems from many sources, many of which are outside the school. My own grandmother was forced by family circumstances to leave school in grade 8, yet she is included in those illiteracy statistics. We have a steady stream of immigrant newcomers with no educational background, yet they are included in the illiteracy statistics. Poverty and poor living conditions have a great deal to do with how one learns, yet they do not show up in the illiteracy statistics.

In 1971, the Toronto board did a study on dropouts. One of the conclusions of that study was that if parents were very aggressive about keeping their sons or daughters in school they normally stayed. That has very little to do with the school, it has to do with the parents. The age group with the highest level of literacy is the one which has just emerged from our schools. This is the reality, but it angers teachers that they seem to be continually blamed for society's latest ills.

Having said this, I would like to highlight just a few points in our written presentation before inviting questions. If you would not mind following along with me, I will take you just to page references.

On page 5, on streaming, we have to ask the fundamental questions: Can the problems with the present system be solved without the massive changes required by destreaming? Can we be sure that such destreaming would not have even

more detrimental effects? We must surely have clear answers to these questions before any such far-reaching change is undertaken. All of us must be confident that the system in place is the one which best enables teachers to serve their students.

If the government contemplates major changes, it must make a long-term commitment to the resources that would be required. We must also secure the commitment of the profession to the superior benefits which would accrue to the students from such change. Unless all of us are convinced that whatever system is in place is the one which best serves the needs of our students, no positive results will occur.

On page 9, on grade promotion, our summary is that grade promotion is retrogressive. Simply put, it exacts far too great a penalty for failure than is acceptable or reasonable in today's society.

It is timely to note that most changes to school programs have been imposed externally by the system. Teachers have valiantly tried to make the system work. Perhaps future change should provide the resources to help teachers shape the program and delivery system so that it best suits the students in their charge.

Page 10 on semestering: without any clear research-based direction, the OSSTF is opposed to the establishment of a mandatory scheduling system. Scheduling decisions profoundly affect all aspects of a school's life—students, teachers, administration, cocurricular activities and the organization and delivery of the curriculum. These decisions should, therefore, remain the joint responsibility of the principal and the school's staff and should involve consultation with students, parents and other community members.

On page 14, on OSIS, OSSTF continues to have serious reservations about the impact of OSIS on the dropout rate. From the outset, OSSTF indicated a number of potentially disruptive effects OSIS might have on secondary school programs and emphasized the increased pressures OSIS places on the students most at risk within our school system. In particular, OSSTF warned of the potential increase in dropouts among students taking primarily basic or general level programs.

On page 16, on the general level, OSSTF continues to be concerned that courses designed for the general level actually accomplish their purpose—appropriate preparation for employment or for further education in certain programs in the colleges of applied arts and technology and

other nondegree-granting, post-secondary educational institutions.

The end value of the Ontario secondary school diploma held by students who have selected courses at the general level of difficulty remains questionable. It is essential that this diploma be viewed as certification of real and useful achievement, not only by the students who earn it but also by the public and employers.

Within the OSIS structure, it is important, particularly for the general level program, that the curriculum be as relevant as possible to the real world of the students we serve. I would like to say that we have been saying this since the secondary education review project and Renewal of Secondary Education. We said it in the OSIS review, yet the very first courses that were developed were the Ontario academic courses which have to do with the advanced level courses.

On page 17, on special education, OSSTF is concerned about the impact of special education legislation on the school's program design and delivery system. Programming for the exceptional student must be provided on a continuum from the regular classroom to the segregated setting. There is an immediate need for information on the classroom practice of integration. OSSTF urges the select committee to encourage the Ministry of Education to complete its research projects on integration forthwith.

1420

Finally, on page 20 is our conclusion. The issues affecting education today are numerous and complex. Decisions about programming, promotion practices and scheduling cannot be made in isolation from consideration of the larger issues of funding the elementary, secondary and post-secondary interface—indeed, the educational policy decision-making process itself.

Another factor affecting education is the pressure to increase the privatization of education. OSSTF fully supports the decision by the Ministry of Education to refuse diploma-granting status to a recently formed, federally funded private business initiative, Yes Canada. In our research, over \$3.6 million was spent for 304 students. The implications of these intrusions by private enterprise into a clearly public domain need full discussion.

Changes, if they come, must come to the system. The system must change to free good teachers to teach; to prepare curriculum and program to meet the needs of students in their particular communities; to try new methods; to share successful classroom practices. Changes,

if they come, must be adequately funded. With that in mind, we have three recommendations, found on page 1.

OSSTF urges the committee not to recommend major changes in Ontario's secondary school educational system programs until, first, all aspects of OSIS have been implemented—there are still 10 papers, for instance, that are not finished; second, the Ministry of Education has conducted a comprehensive review; and third, any suggested changes have been field-tested in Ontario schools over a minimum five-year period if there is to be province-wide implementation.

I just would like to say that in the last three decades we have seen I do not know how many changes and we think it is time to sit back and just examine what we have been doing.

Interjection.

Mr. Head: Our general secretary tells me that I should mention for the record that we do have five resource documents: the OSSTF Response to the Radwanski Report; Reducing The Dropout Rate; Special Education, the January 1986 submission of the OSSTF special education work group to the Ministry of Education; The Secondary School and the New Technology; and Present Challenges, New Directions.

I would ask if there is any other member of the committee who would like to say any words.

Mr. Buckthorp: You have received three pieces of paper today which were just put on your desk, so I will just mention what they are. The one at the top is Technical Education Teacher Requirements, which is a survey at the Fern Resort where the tech ed associations met. Only 93 schools are represented here. As you can see, over the next four years in those various subject areas, 264 tech teachers will be required in only 93 schools. There are over 600 secondary schools in the province—about 650 public secondary schools—plus the separate secondary schools, plus the private schools, which will all be trying to get tech teachers and they just are not available.

A second sheet is a compilation of ministry statistics called Political Action: Education in Ontario. It is just for the record, since you might find it useful some time.

There is also a resource document handed out that came down, I think, with our materials, a group of statistics.

The fourth document was a provincial executive memo, this one on the blue heading, that really synthesizes the major issues involved, including streaming and some of the other things

you are asking us about today, in our present Challenges, New Directions document.

I will be pleased to answer any questions.

Madam Chairman: Thank you. Just before we open up for questions, I would make reference to some of your earlier comments, specifically the fact that you were told if you did not have your brief in by September 2 then you would not be able to appear before the committee. The clerk assures me that her staff was not instructed to say those words. If that was the message that got out to you, we sincerely apologize. The reason for asking for the briefs in advance was requests by members who actually wanted to go through the material and read it before the presenters came so that we would be better prepared to ask appropriate questions and perhaps get further information. I say right now that we apologize if there was any misunderstanding in that regard.

Mr. Head: Thank you. We certainly accept that. We understand the problem of the committee needing the material, but we would have liked to have done a fuller brief; it was quite a constraint for us.

Madam Chairman: Thank you for meeting that restraint and for appearing before us. We will open up for questions.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Thanks very much for coming. I think it should be said that we have tried in the past, not in the select committee but in the standing committee for social development certainly, to work very closely with the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation in terms of using your resources to assist the committee. We hope that somebody from staff will be around in the same way that you have had people around in the past to give us some guidance or tune us into reports we should be looking at and that sort of thing. It has always been very helpful for us.

In terms of whether or not this committee will come up with anything that will be done in the next five years by the government is something which is well beyond our control, but we take your comment about the change that the system has gone through and the sense within the teacher community of the need to let things settle a bit before too many more changes are entered into as one which I think a lot of us have heard from individuals teaching in our own communities.

There were a couple of things I wanted to ask in large terms. One of the things that keeps coming up is invidious comparisons between our education system and other systems around the world. When we had the minister and the deputy here, we got reverse propaganda about the

Japanese coming here to study our programs and things like that, but not much in the way of fact or study. I wonder, because you are part of a national organization of teachers, as well, whether or not the teaching community has done much in the way of trying to look at what is happening in terms of national standards or national trends in some of the issues that we are dealing with that you can guide us through.

Mr. Head: If you do not mind, we are sort of going to go back and forth here to the person who might know more about it than one individual. I am going to go to Mr. Buckthorp.

Mr. Buckthorp: Back when the secondary education review project and the Renewal of Secondary Education were being done, we did a study on how our students do in comparison to other provinces. At that time, we were doing it in connection with keeping grade 13, whether our students were better qualified and whether they did well. It showed that we measured up very well against other countries and provinces.

Our major concern is that every time we hear about one of these other major wonderful things happening in the United States or somewhere else, two months later we hear something like A Nation at Risk coming out saying that their system is falling apart. It seems that all over North America and Europe at the moment everyone is trying to come to grips with the same problems. No one has come up with any magic solutions, and maybe there is a message in that. Maybe we are trying to find a magic solution instead of a flexible system with several approaches to help our students.

Ms. St. Amand: Just to add to that, in talking with my colleagues in different countries across the world, especially in relation to the international studies that are taking place, one of the things that is very clear is that here in Ontario we offer an educational system to every one of our potential students, whereas in countries like Japan, because of the kind of system that is in operation there, the students who are actually subject to these tests represent about 10 per cent of the full population. I think that is an important consideration for us to remember, that really in these international studies we are comparing apples and oranges.

Mr. Head: I think it is fair to say that we have been trying to compile those statistics. They are very difficult to get, though.

Mr. Eaton: Just a quick comment. When we went through the SERP and ROSE processes with the Ministry of Education and others, one of the

things that was concluded, I think, is that you could not take all of a system from somewhere else and transplant it to Ontario. I think one of the critical things is to make sure that the cultural and historical aspects of education are understood when you try either to compare or to bring the best things from a system like Germany or England to Ontario. I agree with my colleagues that this is a very difficult one to compare and a difficult one to take holus-bolus right into Ontario. You can take parts and you can look at the good things, but you cannot make that quantum leap.

1430

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That comment is helpful, but I was actually also thinking more particularly about the national organization to which you belong. I wonder if, say, when you looked at dropouts, as you did, which sort of initiated some of the figures being thrown around these days, which I am not sure many of us accepted as being quite as horrific as maybe they looked in the first place, whether you did any work with your sister organizations around the country in terms of what they were finding and methods they were using. I was just wondering if in the process of any of that there is information we could maybe make use of and spread around to our members as well?

Mr. Eaton: In Reducing the Dropout Rate, which is the document you have, the people who were involved in putting that together certainly talked to our colleagues in every province, a number of states in the US and some European countries. We found similar things and similar studies being done in the various areas. The information we have supplied you in that document—we are in our fifth reprinting of that, by the way—partly reflects Ontario and reflects some of the studies and information we have received from right across Canada and from many states in the US.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: There is one question, which is only sort of allied to what we are talking about, but you referred to it, so I want to come back to it. You touched on technical education, which is a major concern for all of us in terms of what is happening in streaming. We are waiting for some statistics from the government as of this morning to see what the figures are now for the enrolment in tech courses and just what sort of jeopardy it is in.

Then you raised the whole matter of teachers who are not going to be there in the next little while in this area. I wonder if you could talk to us a little about that element of things, the teacher

training, what seems to be a horrendous lack of planning in terms of meeting those kinds of needs that are out there. When I asked the government about it recently, it said that except in one or two areas—tech is one and French—it really did not see any potential shortages coming in the near future and there was really no major desire to revamp our system. But I am hearing from teachers in an anecdotal way that we are just at the edge of some fairly major problems in fields which you would not expect. I wonder if you have any comments about that and how all of that fits into the chaos you worry about with too much change coming into the system.

Mr. Head: We focused on technical education teachers mainly because it was an area we were asked to look at, but I would like to say for the record that there is going to be a major teacher shortage. Our concern with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities is not just for tech teachers; it is to open up the education faculties so that many more students can get in. There are at least four areas which we know are already in trouble: math and science areas, French immersion and technical education. Those four areas have already been identified. If you try to get a teacher in the fall in those areas, you are in some difficulty.

That is something we are most concerned about, but I think when you look at our average teaching age in terms of population, which is over 46 now in our affiliate, there are opportunities there, given that there is going to be a little baby bulge down the road in the early 1990s, that we are going to have opportunities for all kinds of teachers. Are there any other statistics?

Mr. Buckthorp: Just a comment. It looks as though over the next five to 10 years there is going to be a very large turnover in our membership. For instance, that age 46 as average is going to go rapidly lower as the bulge of people who came in from the 1950s are going to be retiring. The retirement window is the one that is going to affect the tech ed most next year because that is the last year of the window, we have been told. There will be a large number of teachers go and we do not have people in the faculties to replace them.

When we have talked to the faculties, they say the universities are starving them and they do not have the money to offer the programs. In the tech programs, they have two very small classes handling the tech input at Queen's University and the University of Western Ontario and they are not able to handle it; nor are the people from business and industry coming in to be teachers,

because they would come in to teaching at, say, \$21,000, \$24,000 or something when they are earning \$50,000, \$60,000 and \$70,000 as tradespeople. It is just very hard to get them and I think it is a crisis in the tech ed area.

French is also a very critical area. I was talking to some principals. I am also executive secretary of the Ontario Secondary School Principals' Council. You will see me tomorrow as well. They have the latest survey data which will show you a little more of what is happening in the schools.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I have one other thing and I will then leave it to other members. The streaming issue is a difficult one and a complex one. I think your analysis is correct. Nobody really thought of streaming as something which was going to dead-end identifiable groups. I do not think that was ever the intention.

Arguments about ability-grouping of one sort or another and streaming to maximize potential are well made through many generations now of writings and practice. But the statistics seem to be just unavoidable that poor kids, poor families, end up being streamed lower. Their educational results tend to be much worse than other groups. A couple of our ethnic groups, like the French community and the native community specifically, can also be identified fairly easily in that area.

No one presumes, I do not think, that because you come from a poor family that you are educationally inferior, or because you are French or you are native, as the case may be, but clearly we have not been able to give them the same educational outcome expectations as the middle-class white Canadian has at this point. I guess that I would just say that I take as good advice the notion that we should not rush into what would be a major overhaul of our system and that kind of thing.

Given that these groups have been left aside now for so long and the dangers to kids of being undereducated in our society are even worse and more severe as we become more technologically sophisticated, what are the add-ons, if there are add-ons, that can be put into the system now while we try to deal with this issue systematically and that can be brought in to assist in the meantime?

I have a great sense of urgency about this just because of my own background and interest. It just strikes me that we cannot sit back and not do anything to address what is a very-easy-to-see problem identified by teachers firsthand. What does the OSSTF say we should be doing as interim steps, if nothing else, if destreaming is

not the total answer, at least not to rush into precipitously?

Mr. Head: We have a great concern about the full ramifications of Bill 7 because there is differentiation in that bill between teachers and trainers. The trainers are the ones who are handling this—the whole linguistic problem of English as a second language and English as a second language/dialect.

To make that distinction starts to give an inferiority quality to the very groups we are trying to help, which are those with dialect problems and the poor. We would like to see that quality upgraded so there is not that distinction.

Ms. St. Amand: Just a note to say that OSIS really does not stream by ability, which is what I think is suggested in the comment you have made, but it streams by destination. I think other groups have appeared before you and made that point as well.

As long as we have a system whereby parents and students select the courses available for them at the high school level, then what we have to do—and this is going to involve the commitment by the government of more adequate funding—is to make sure that the resources are there to enable students to experience the outcomes that they fully expect the system is going to provide for them.

Mr. Eaton: I want to add to that too because I think one of the key things—streamed or unstreamed system—is what kind of remedial help is available. In other words, if there are teachers there with 25 or 30 students in a classroom and there are two students who have some difficulty, how is the teacher going to cope with a whole class full of kids and try to give special attention to two or three?

Whether you are moving towards streaming, or destreaming and moving away from it, that remedial aspect has to be there. If you are looking for something that is instant today, the remedial help for kids who need it in classrooms is critical.

1440

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I think that point is well made in terms of learning disability, forgetting the specific question I am raising. But I do have a little concern with the notion—I understand the theory of what OSIS is supposed to be doing and I understand the theory that kids and parents are actually making these decisions in ways that are nonprogrammed rather than programmatic.

Many of the teachers I deal with now deal with inner-city schools, and they say that much has changed in terms of where those kids end up

going. A lot of them say it is because of a lack of support at home, or in some cases it is because of coming into the school system behind and not being able to catch up because of a lack of resources earlier on in the elementary panel; all sorts of other factors like that. I am not sure by the time they get streamed at the high school level—and I do not want to put words in your mouth—that they are not following anything but something which is very programmed at that point and very inevitable.

Mr. Head: I would say that it is important to have good continuous education so that if there is a dropout problem, the remedy is a good drop-in program. I think teachers are starting to be fairly innovative in how they reach the kinds of students you have been talking about, with storefront operations, satellite programs and that type of thing, taking the school to the community rather than the community coming to the school.

Ms. St. Amand: Just as a final comment on that, I might draw your attention to page 4 of our brief where we make note of Ellen Karp's work. Ellen found that, of the three classifications of motivators for dropping out reported by the students themselves, streaming was a minor factor. It did not fit into either of the other two factors.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I was not sure when I saw the report on that whether it was not the way the question was articulated to them that made that answer come back, but that is mildly argumentative.

Madam Chairman: We have Mr. Beer, Mr. Mahoney, Mrs. O'Neill; and if time allows Mr. Jackson has indicated he might have a question.

Mr. Beer: I must say I feel very sympathetic to the three recommendations that you have set out. It does seem to me with a lot of the problems that we have had, perceived problems or real problems, the tendency to always rip everything out and totally change it is something that can lead us into a lot more difficulty. Perhaps some of the problems that Radwanski identified are ones that in effect can be dealt with by changes within the way the present system is being implemented. But when that system has as yet not been implemented, it is sometimes difficult to know if in fact that is a problem. I do not think that anybody can give a categorical statement about semestering, streaming, all of these different things we have heard about.

I think what Mr. Johnston is referring to, as I see it, is the problem that when we look at our system and we look at other systems, we tend to

feel that we have a pretty good system. We are Canadians so we do not always say it is number one, but I think on any kind of comparative test we have done that Ontario has a pretty good system. At the same time, we are very troubled by other things that we see, whether it is the dropout or whether it is the kind of people who seem to be more into general as opposed to advanced programs. Then we look back and ask how this is happening since we feel that our system is as good as it ought to be.

In that context, and I suppose one of the things that this committee is grappling with, and I suspect as it goes on will be spending a great deal of time on, is the question of streaming and the question of whether certain groups of people are ending up shortchanged. How can we find a way to ensure that through the process there is a better system of review so that those students who may have been dead-ended or are being directed in a certain way have the opportunity to shift, whether through better remedial programs or a whole series of things. We do not have the answers and whether we will at the end is perhaps a moot point, but I think it certainly is worth while that we are exploring the questions.

What I would like to get at in using that as an example is the role, then, in an organizational sense, specifically of your association, and one could add in the various other educational bodies, in terms of developing those policies. You have noted in a number of instances, for example, some good work that has been done, where you say, "Look, this was a good report, but the classroom teacher really had no direct input into it." One could, undoubtedly, find other examples, and in some cases examples where the end result you do not feel was all that good, and if there had been classroom teachers involved in it it would have been much better.

Do you have a position on this, as these different reviews or new programs are being developed? Are you saying that the OSSTF and the other major educational bodies should be directly involved automatically? And where do we go from there? Are we then saying that the various parent groups—how broad an organizational field do we develop in terms of the input that teachers should have in the development of educational policy in all its ramifications?

Mr. Head: I think there is no doubt we are saying we would like to be involved at every step of the way. The fact of the matter is if you have some ownership, then you are going to do your best to make it work. If we are not involved, it comes as a laid-on aspect as opposed to a

working-it-out aspect. I would have to be as bold as to say, yes, every step of the way.

On the other hand, I can accept the fact that you have a large constituency to answer to. I fully understand that. So if we are not going to be involved at every step of the way, then at least let us have the chance for reaction before it is public. Things just come out of the blue and there is a media heyday for a week, and after a while we start to wonder just how much of a partner we are.

Mr. Beer: In that context, in terms of, say, your relationship with boards on the one hand and the ministry on the other, do you see that problem being a similar one at each of those levels; or is it, I will say, better with one than the other? Where is the place that you see you would like to have much more input and do not have it?

Mr. Head: Right at the grass roots. The best document the ministry produced in OSIS was the discipline document where it asked the community and the teachers in the school to get involved together. As a result of that, it was a positive experience. If you want positive experience, it has to happen right at the grass roots.

We understand the role of the ministry in making policy and answering to the general public in terms of its constituency, but we are simply saying we do have something to offer and we think it works better when we are all in it together: not just the teachers, but the students, the parents and the working community.

Mr. Mahoney: Just in the interest of proper rotation, Madam Chairman, I would offer to trade places with Mr. Jackson, if he would like to go ahead, and then I could come on after. We have not heard his questions yet, so I would like to put that offer on the table.

Madam Chairman: Actually, I offered that to Mr. Jackson. He indicated he had taken a fair amount of time this morning, so in the interest of being gracious to other members—

Mr. Mahoney: I do not mind, Cam, if you want to go ahead.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: It must be the mid-term blues.

Mr. Mahoney: I just wanted that noted in case you decided later to complain about the rotation, but I am prepared, seriously, to allow you to go.

Madam Chairman: All this niceness will end on October 18.

Mr. Mahoney: It is up to Mr. Jackson. What would he prefer?

Mr. Jackson: Well, I will proceed, thank you.

Thank you for an excellent presentation. I just wanted to pick up on a point that I had been raising in this morning's session with respect to semestering. You seem to have a bit of a "hands-on but hands-off" approach to semestering. In your brief and in your verbal presentation, you are saying that really you are opposed to mandatory scheduling systems; it is a decision by the principal and staff primarily, but should include students and the public. You do not mention trustees, but you say "should."

1450

I am embroiled in a very controversial situation where a principal and his staff tried to take the last nonsemestered school out of that organization without consulting the public and it created all sorts of problems. Obviously, the principal was consistent with the attitude of OSSTF because that is what was being done. It was just being privately dealt with by the principal and the staff.

But on a matter of this magnitude and given the kinds of questions I raised, many of which you have heard, do you not feel that—well, more generally—this should be something we should look at in terms of standardization, given the point that Mr. Cooke raised about adult education and access for continuing education during the regular school day—literacy programs, greater use of our schools? There is a whole series of things where stabilizing a consistent schedule between schools within a community is a desired effect, as well as the integration with post-secondary programs and a variety of other issues.

Is there some other reason why you have adopted such a "let's not touch it and let's not standardize it" attitude? I am trying to find out where you are really coming through. I do not see educational reasons; I just see an issue of autonomy being discussed in front of me here.

Mr. Head: I think there are good educational reasons.

Mr. Jackson: That is what I would like to hear.

Mr. Head: We know, for instance, that semestering does have a positive effect on a number of subjects but it also causes some problems for a number of subjects. Our language teachers have said that continuity is more important in terms of language development than having a full semester with a language, then the second semester having no language and picking it up the next year or maybe not until a year later. In language development, that is one area where

there is a problem. Keyboarding skill is another area.

Our report, *Semestering the Secondary Schools*, does indicate a number of areas in which it is preferable not to have the semestered block of time. We do come at it from an educational point of view. Right now, 70 per cent of Ontario is semestered as a result of OSIS. OSIS generated that, and by generating that also allowed for the mandatory subjects to be dealt with quickly and easily; so for convenience's sake that happened. That is part of the problem, that some of the subject areas have had so much trouble in terms of enrolment; it has created some enrolment patterns I think we could document quite well.

If you go back and trace this historically, the credit system started out and English went from eight periods to five. A lot of people forget that when they talk about literacy skills and what has been happening across the school system. It went to five periods for one simple reason. The computer dealt with equal blocks of time and everybody wanted a credit to be equal to a credit; English had to equal any other subject area, so went down to five. That has been part of the problem. The computer aspect of it, to make things all the same, creates its own problems.

I would simply say that now we have the computer as a tool—and almost every school has it; banks of computers in schools now—it should be possible to semester as well as not semester within the same school.

Mr. Jackson: I am familiar with the concept.

Mr. Head: I think creative timetabling could do some very creative things.

Mr. Jackson: It is very difficult. I am a bit old-fashioned. I think a student should be taking English in each of the five years. I firmly believe that, although you would never know that was the system wasted on me.

I would like you to comment, if you would, on this notion that the public should be more involved in the fundamental decision to change the structure of a school. I have a lot of parents who call me and say: "Look, my son or daughter—I will read you the schedule. Do you believe it?" Of course I believe it. I was part of the system that developed it. With so much free time or such limited academic activity in a given day, when you consider one spare and a lunch, you chew up almost half a day.

Mr. Head: We do say on the bottom of page 10 that we do want consultation with the full educational community; if we left out trustees, that was an oversight on our part. I think we

meant by that the other community members. I apologize for that oversight.

Mr. Jackson: I was hoping you would have the word "should" for "must." It consumes hours of debate in the Legislative Assembly, the word "should" over "must." You can well appreciate "shall" and "must."

Mr. Head: I think we do believe in the consultation process. We would not have been here saying that—

Mr. Jackson: That is what I wanted to hear for the record, for Nelson High School's purposes, anyway, so thank you very much.

Mr. Head: You are more than welcome.

I would like to just make one other comment, while I am thinking about it, in response to Mr. Beer's question. We do have an umbrella organization called the Ontario Teachers' Federation too. I am not saying OSSTF has to be in on every decision. OTF, for instance, is very deeply involved in teacher education, so it can be at various levels of the partnership.

Mr. Mahoney: First of all, I just want to say for the record that I consider organizations such as yours a very valuable resource for the government to give us information. I hope we will take into account your concerns very strongly in any future decisions or recommendations that are made.

I would like to know if you have actual statistics on your statements with regard to illiteracy. I tend to agree; it is almost a buzzword today to say we are producing all these illiterate people. I frankly do not see them, and I deal with young people every day. I just do not see that as a true statement. I wonder if you have statistics that would—

Mr. R. F. Johnston: You have to stop skipping caucus meetings.

Mr. Mahoney: That is right. I said young people, Richard. I know many old people who are illiterate and they would fall into the category statistically that OSSTF is referring to, so if you have that kind of data about elderly or whatever, I would appreciate getting them.

Mr. Buckthorp: Generally, I think the statistics we would have in that area would be government statistics, showing how it calculates and what the statistics are on illiteracy.

One of our real problems is that almost every day, especially the last few days, we read in the press about the illiteracy moneys coming out and all the rest of it. We have not been involved in discussion on any of that, and yet the first thing the media does is say the schools are to blame for

our people being illiterate. Then business and industry has this thing coming up on illiteracy, and we were not involved in any of that either. We say, "Well, if you think we can do something about it, why don't you involve us in the discussions?"

Mr. Mahoney: I am not convinced we were involved in that announcement either. In fact, I can tell you—

Mr. Buckthorp: You are pretty sure you were not.

Mr. Mahoney: I can tell you we were not, even though we are going to be asked to come to the table with some money.

Mr. Head: I think we need a definition of illiteracy, that is for sure.

Mr. Buckthorp: Yes, a common definition of illiteracy.

Mr. Head: As a common place to start. But on a positive note, we are pleased that the government has put extra money into the elementary system so that the classes can be smaller. If you look at any of the remedial programs, even in the private system, if you look at their class size you will see that they very rarely go above nine in terms of a remedial program in order to help. So there is an area I think we would be happy to be involved in to work specifically on that.

There are a number of life skill programs we have been developing to try to upgrade those things, especially in terms of re-entry programs where we allow students to get into the workforce as well as go to school. It is within that context, I think, that continuing education is more important than ever. I can see, for instance, the 24-hour school and the 365-day school in order to facilitate this, because it is not possible if you are working all day for your bread and butter to get into these programs.

Mr. Mahoney: On the streaming issue, I tried to read a little bit between the lines in your presentation and I have had a chance to read briefly from this document that you just handed us. I see a couple of discrepancies, albeit between the lines.

The sense I get from your presentation is that you are opposed, as an organization, to de-streaming without coming up with the alternative in place prior to de-streaming. Yet the sense I get from this document on whether to stream or not to stream is that you do not think the streaming system, particularly on the downside of grade 10, is working or is good. Can you give me a clear statement about OSSTF's position? Are you supporting that streaming take place some time

during grade 10 and that it cease to happen in grade 8?

1500

Mr. Head: I think the whole point of our present challenge is to arrive at a clear position. There are voices on both sides of that in OSSTF. We do want to have a clear policy on that and we will have one developed by March for our annual meeting, which will then get full debate by our representative members.

A lot of the research is American. That is our major concern. If you were to look at our special education brief, you would see that we have some concerns there about integration that have to be at least looked at. The whole point of our gifted programs, for instance, was to give students a certain motivation. I do not think in special ed we ever envisioned an integration of gifted students, and yet that is all part of our special ed program.

The other side of the coin is students with severe handicaps who need a lot of personal and remedial help. Although we generally support integration, we also support real resources to make those things happen. That is part of streaming, too. I think you are right in saying we do not have a clear position on it. We are trying to develop that.

Mr. Mahoney: I read in one of these documents a statement to the effect that—actually I said it this morning in the hearing—the gifted are looked after rather well today and the learning disabled are looked after rather well today. It is the middle kid who goes into the general program who seems to be falling through the cracks.

One of the concerns that I have expressed regarding the semestering issue is an 80-minute period; the fact that Mr. Jackson mentioned, that a student may go for a substantial period of time without taking a particular subject, i.e., English. What is your association's position on the 80-minute period and the slack time or the time where they are not taking a particular subject?

Mr. Head: Generally, our teachers like semestering and long periods, not necessarily in that order. You do not have to have semestering to have long periods. For certain subjects, they are absolutely a gift—physical education activities, media courses where you have to look at a film. Rather than walk out, you can get right into the writing and the discussion of that film. There are history classes where they show films on television, those sorts of things. By and large, our teachers like that.

The students find that, in terms of their own preparation, they handle it better, so there is a

motivation factor. But it is not true for all subjects and all students.

Mr. Mahoney: I might just add in closing that in the summer hearings we had I did not hear or sense any teacher bashing coming from the groups that came before us or from the committee. I think there is a sense that we do have to work together.

Madam Chairman: Technically, the time is up, but Mrs. O'Neill has been waiting patiently to ask a brief question.

Mrs. O'Neill: It follows the point made by Mr. Mahoney. First of all, I would like to commend Doris St. Amand for bringing to our attention that she has given of her time and gone internationally and spoken to people and been on site, I presume, with other educational systems. I think the judgement call you have made about our attempt to serve all students is one that needs to be underlined as much as possible.

To get back to the streaming question, which is one we are definitely going to have to make some recommendations on—it is a very clear part of our mandate—I may have overlooked something here, but I have looked again and there seems to be a lot of emphasis in what you are saying on the problems of curriculum development, problems of administering basically, more than with the students, regarding streaming. You have just stated that the effects on the students are still a question for you. But at this point, surely, you must have some pros for streaming.

Some of you, I think, by looking at you, were around when I was around, when there was no streaming, in the 1970s. The school boards developed up to seven or eight different categories of students. In the last five or six years, we have gone back to three. I think a highlight is that what we are talking about here is grading courses, not students, as far as labelling goes.

I found very interesting Doris's comment that streaming refers to destination, not ability. I had not ever heard it put that way. I commend her for bringing that to my attention. Could you say a little bit more about the effect of streaming on students at the secondary level?

I think most of us know that streaming begins even at prekindergarten, in many ways. At the secondary level, where there is much more peer pressure and where parents are much more aware of the ultimate goals or some goals their children are achieving or attempting to work towards, is there a difference in the effect of streaming on the student? I would like to hear a little more of the effect on the student, because you are the people who meet the student every day.

Mr. Head: I am going to go to Doris, but I will say that there is one major effect. Students who take primarily general level courses find it very difficult to get into colleges.

Mrs. O'Neill: I think that is quite a well-known statistic.

Mr. Head: We initially thought that was a reason for the colleges' existence.

Mrs. O'Neill: I am thinking more of the student and what goes on every day. I am just thinking of what effect streaming has on the student's input into his own programming, into his own class and into his own school.

Ms. St. Amand: Thank you very much for the compliment. When we asked students those very questions through the study *The Adolescent Experience*, which is now available for you to read, we discovered the same kind of thing that Ellen Karp did in her study. That is that our students do not see streaming as being a major factor in their decision to go forward with their education or to drop out of school.

We found that the major motivators that students report, in terms of dropping out of school, were academic frustrations, the need to have relevancy demonstrated in the work that they were taking in the schools and the pull of the work environment. Those were the very major motivators that Ellen Karp found in her study.

I think streaming is a complex issue and it is good for us to listen to what students have to say to us and to do whatever we can within the situation of the schools to ensure that every student has equal educational opportunities.

Mrs. O'Neill: I will await your further deliberations.

Mr. Head: I think it is fair to say that if we are going to be looking at streaming, we would like to see its emphasis towards career goals rather than levels of difficulty. I think that is fair to say.

Madam Chairman: I would like to thank the OSSTF for coming before us today. We have certainly found the information you have provided us with very valuable. I am certain it will be a strong factor in our deliberation.

Mr. Head: If you give us a year's extension, we will be happy to come back and give the follow-up to this.

Madam Chairman: We will all work towards that.

The next delegation is the Association of Large School Boards in Ontario. Fiona Nelson is the president. We ask Fiona to come forward with her group. Welcome back to the select committee on education. We are very much

looking forward to hearing your presentation today.

ASSOCIATION OF LARGE SCHOOL BOARDS IN ONTARIO

Mrs. Nelson: We are very glad to be back here. I am Fiona Nelson, president of the Association of Large School Boards in Ontario. I have brought with me trustee Carol Parker, who chairs our curriculum committee and who will be presenting the brief on our behalf.

I am sorry that Mr. Beatty, who is the superintendent and who has been of great help to us, was unable at the last minute to come, but we will do our best to carry on. We are very glad that you are having this session on OSIS and grade promotion and the subjects that you gave us to discuss.

We have found it very useful, in clarifying our thoughts, to have the subject matter broken up in the way that you have. We are hoping that you are going to have additional sessions on teacher training and supervisory practices and the financial arrangements of education in this province, because we have a few things to say about those as well.

1510

Madam Chairman: Actually, we have not determined our agenda for the winter session, but we will certainly add that to the list for discussion.

Mrs. Nelson: Good, I know you have not. We were just hoping to encourage you because they are certainly subjects of great interest to us and the subjects we are going to address today have tremendous impact on things such as teacher training and vice versa, so it would be very helpful for us to make some comments in that regard.

We are sorry that we were so late in providing you with copies of our brief. As I am sure you know, the summer is a hideously difficult time to get people together to discuss things and make decisions. We have been doing a great deal of it by telephone, by sending copies out and waiting for responses and we were getting responses as late as this morning. So we were printing this a couple of hours ago. That is why we are so late.

We do apologize, but we hope that our submission will be of some value to you. We have tried to work very closely with the Ministry of Education on the development of education policy in this province. Our boards are, I think, very much in the forefront of implementing policies that we think will be of benefit to young people and students of all ages in this province.

So we are very grateful for the opportunity to continue in that role with you.

I think at this point I will let trustee Parker take over and make our specific comments and recommendations. Then, when we are finished, we would be very glad to have some conversation with you. We are not going to read you the report. We are just going to skim over it once lightly.

Mrs. Parker: I would like to add my thanks to Fiona for this opportunity. I also have a question at some point, which I guess I would like to address at the end of our time, if I may.

I will give you a short outline of the brief which addresses the documents *The Formative Years* and *OSIS*. It also addresses streaming, grade promotion and alternative timetabling arrangements, such as semestering. To go through it in order, our first recommendation is that the document *The Formative Years* not be changed. We consider it to be appropriate still for young children, it has sufficient structure to give the guidance needed for organizing schools for learning and yet allowing sufficient flexibility for adapting the curriculum to the needs of individual students.

It also appears, from the Ministry of Education's review, that student achievement since this document has been in use is as good, if not better, using the teaching strategies that are incorporated in it.

Our second recommendation is with regard to the *OSIS* document. The recommendation is that it either should be significantly changed or replaced by two documents, one for the intermediate division and one for the senior division. We do feel that the senior division section of this document, now that the university entry courses are labelled Ontario academic courses, is appropriate. But we would like to see in it more courses with a practical orientation and with a suitable evaluation for these courses.

We would also like to see, as there is provision for them, transition courses developed, because there is not at the moment many ways for students to move between levels. The finite math is a good example of a good transition course. There is obviously provision for others and those should be studied.

We believe that a major reform should take place at the intermediate division. It is this section of *OSIS* that we think should be rewritten as a basic document, similar to *The Formative Years*, and should include the same basics—language, math, social studies, science, technology, arts, physical and health—and that the

diploma requirements should be redefined with these changes in mind.

We also recommend that 75 per cent of the grades 7 and 8 students' time should be spent on these subjects and 25 per cent used for a variety of exploratory short courses, which would give the students a chance to study subjects within their range of interest, and that the topics of these courses should be from as wide a range as possible.

In grades 9 and 10, we recommend that 50 per cent of the students' time should be devoted to these basic studies and the other 50 per cent used either for further exploratory courses or for them to begin work on graduation diploma credits. This would obviously depend largely on the ability and interest of the student and the availability of the courses.

With regard to streaming, ALSBO neither condemns nor endorses streaming. We feel that it should not be institutionalized in the curriculum guidelines of the ministry. It should be a decision made with the best interests of the student in mind, in consultation with the school, the parents and as many people close to the student as possible; that this decision should be made as close to the student as possible.

With regard to grade promotion, we do not support or oppose a rigid format for student promotion. Grade promotion is somewhat contrary to our previously stated philosophical support of the individual student. However, I would like to reiterate our previous comments in our other brief with regard to communication. It is our belief that communication with regard to the language used in education is the most important thing. Blinding parents with educational jargon is a big mistake because it leads to misunderstanding and it creates a gap in communication at a time when co-operation between parents and school is extremely important.

It is our understanding that it is a misunderstanding of use of words and that perhaps this should be clarified before more decisions are made about how to do this and what to talk about to the parents with regard to promotion; for example, what is the difference between social promotion and grade promotion.

On alternative timetabling—for example, semestering—ALSBO supports the concept of alternative student timetabling such as semestering because for certain students and certain subjects it makes educational sense. But we do not support it being prescribed by the ministry. We would like it to be another area of flexibility

which a board may use if it is in the best interests of the students.

Finally, we would like to stress that any change that is envisioned for the school system must be supported by careful implementation plans to take into account the provision of necessary learning materials and other resources, and in particular education and professional development for teachers. They are the most important resources for the students in the school. Any changes that are going to be made should not be made in the school and then the teachers catch up with them afterwards; the changes should be made at the teacher training and professional development level and then brought into the classroom.

That is the end of my précis of our brief. There is a page with those recommendations at the end of the brief, but I have outlined them.

Madam Chairman: Thank you, Mrs. Parker. Mrs. Nelson, do you have any comments to add before we go to question time?

Mrs. Nelson: No. I think if we go into questions, we will cover anything that needs to be said by us.

Madam Chairman: We will start with Mrs. O'Neill, followed by Mr. Johnston.

Mrs. O'Neill: I was very happy to see you mentioned parents at least twice. I am very happy that, as a group of trustees, you are very conscious that this is a very key part of our strategy and necessity for the good of the student, that the parents be kept as actively informed and as involved as possible. That is a good note.

I would like you to go to the section, on page 7 of your major document, regarding the intermediate division because we are not too far into a major change in the intermediate division where we did put a lot of programs in as mandatory that had not been mandatory before, such as guidance and also having the arts now mandatory. As far as I know, that is only five or six years in place.

Could you tell us a little more about what your new vision—it seems to be a new vision—would be for that division? Up until this point, we have not talked much about that vision. Second, I find parents are becoming happier with that area rather than less happy. I may have missed something and maybe you can help me with where you are coming from on this one.

1520

Mrs. Nelson: The intermediate division, as you know, is grades 7, 8, 9 and 10. This is when youngsters are just getting into adolescence. It has been our feeling that, on paper, the ministry

for many years—in fact decades—has perceived that as a distinct stage in a child's development, and yet the curriculum documents and the organization of the schools do not reflect that. It seems to us that what Mr. Radwanski had to say about children having to make life choices at younger and younger stages and the dangers of that is very appropriate and does have something, we are sure, to do with children becoming alienated and dropping out.

It seems to us, therefore, that much more emphasis on early adolescence, on making sure that children have a very wide range of experience before they make any irrevocable choices—at the moment those choices, except for unusual children, are irrevocable—needs to be looked at much more carefully.

We think that if you closely examine streaming, the streaming for senior children makes sense because by then they are senior students. By then they are ready to make some life choices. At the intermediate division, you are all aware of children who are late bloomers. You are aware of the fact that often the girls, to their chagrin, are a year or two ahead in their development over the boys. A whole lot of things are going on. Those children are all busy catching up with their glands. All sorts of things are happening that make it very difficult for them to cope with these kinds of choices.

It seems to us that we need a great deal more awareness of that in the structure of the schools, in the teacher training. There is the idea of mentoring. A great many of these things would be terribly valuable at that stage. It needs a really strong look at the system, at the teacher training, at the structures, a tremendous amount more of involvement of the home, of the parents, so that we can better serve those children. That is the sort of thing we are referring to.

We would love to be able to develop that far more. As I mentioned earlier, we were caught a bit short in trying to get anything of substance to you at this stage, but if you are going to look at the intermediate division, we would very much like to be involved in that sort of discussion. There are some things Mr. Radwanski said that we do not agree with, but there are some things he hit right on the head. Some of his analysis was very good in that respect, and we would like to see that developed in teacher training and in the organization of the school at that level.

Mrs. O'Neill: If I may just respond; you are, I presume, asking for something that is a much stronger mandate; because there are boards,

public and separate boards, that are doing that, putting together an intermediate division.

Mrs. Nelson: That is right.

Mrs. O'Neill: I know that at the teachers training centres or the faculties of education, better terminology, intermediate and senior, is certainly one very strong possibility in courses. People can take junior and intermediate, but they must take two levels.

I presume what you are asking for, because there is some latitude now in the province and some people are coming to grips with it, is something more strongly mandated with maybe a little more direction regarding breaking down, for instance, the 30 credits into a different kind of structure. Am I on the right track?

Mrs. Nelson: Yes, the credits make a lot of sense at the senior level. At the intermediate level, a different approach might be in order, where there would be fewer, if any, options and far more possibility for children to have a really good grounding in the core subjects, the basics, as we mentioned them, and in a wide range of experiences to give them some basis for their choices.

It seems to us that while in the documents and in a variety of ways we give lipservice to that organization, when you actually look at the way schools are set up in a great many places—part of it is federation jurisdiction, part of it is teacher training with teachers coming from one organization, traditionally, for the elementary schools and another for secondary—there has often been a break either at the end of grade 8 or the end of grade 9, whatever, that has interrupted that flow. We are saying that if we really mean that, then we have to look at that organization much more closely. That does seem to be, for many children, the crunch, the place where the system breaks down in many ways.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is a very good brief. It is also nice to see an organization like ALSBO grab on to an idea like this, with the very strong consensus that clearly is behind it, and put it forward. I think it is very timely for us as we move along now, looking at questions of streaming and all the other matters together. It is a very innovative approach and an interesting way to adapt what Radwanski is talking about as well. I found it quite interesting, although in my mind it is not jelled as completely as ALSBO's has on this at this point.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: It is jelled?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is jelled. I am still trying to catch up with my glands. What can I do?

Mrs. O'Neill: I have a feeling that one is going to haunt me.

Interjections.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I just hope I never catch them totally. That is another matter.

Mr. Beer: Stop while you are ahead.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Society is still safe at this point.

I wondered if your comments about streaming reflected in fact just the opposite, and that is that you are unable to come to consensus on that. Rather than this being a strong consensus position, that it is really a matter that there are people on boards or parts of boards who feel strongly pro and con, and the only way for ALSBO to deal with that, as a group of boards, was to take a softer, less defined position, if I can put it that way, on streaming.

Mrs. Nelson: I think there are very significant splits among educators and among boards on the subject of streaming. Very often it is more of a political than an educational split, but I think that among the people who were writing this brief and with whom we had discussions during the summer, there is a very profound concern about the young adolescents and what we are doing to them these days. I think this was one of the ideas we came forward with. You have to understand there was no vote taken at ALSBO. We did not have time. We did a lot of consulting on the phone and by fax and that sort of thing, and this is the consensus of the people with whom we had some correspondence.

It does seem to us that early adolescence is a time when youngsters are trying very hard to be independent and sometimes we give them independence they do not really want. A different structure of the school system for this age level might be one way to give them the security and the sort of matrix they could expand within as they develop some capabilities and some independence, and still give them the experience so that they are not making choices in a vacuum. I think that, more than anything else, was our feeling; and at this stage it is really more of a feeling than anything else.

There are places, as Mrs. O'Neill mentioned, that have done some organizing in this way. There is a separate school up in Wawa that I went to visit once that is organized, in grades 7 to 10, that does this very, very nicely; and I am sure there are others. It would seem to me that we need to look more at some of these examples that exist, find the legislative constraints, the organi-

zational constraints that prevent it from being more widely applied, and get on with it.

Mrs. Parker: I also think that one of the concerns, as I mentioned, is the lack of mobility between streams. That is certainly something that concerns myself and also our board, the lack of transition courses and the difficulty a student has, feeling he has been channelled into something he cannot get out of.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I agree, and we had some discussion about this this morning, as to how few boards have actually been able to take up on it and how little direction—I was going to say from the government—there is coming on this in terms of how important it is.

I am wondering if you see a conflict there between moving towards making decisions later à la Radwanski or, say, grade 10ish, in terms of your analysis of the readiness of kids of that stage; and then your notion of being able to make the transition back and forth, if you have only a much more limited number of credits before the D-Day, if I can put it that way, or graduation day. Are those two things maybe not a little bit in conflict as well? How would you see that working itself through?

Mrs. Parker: I think that conflict is there now because of the system as it is. If there were less time for getting their credits in, such as just grade 11, 12 and whatever—you are going to pull grade 13—then obviously that and the fact that at that age they are going to be more mature and make more informed choices, hopefully, because they will have had more experience, means that conflict probably will not happen. But at the moment there is definitely a problem, and as I said the finite math course is a great example of a good course that can bridge that gap. There are not enough of them.

Obviously, you are not going to make any changes overnight and there is still going to be one system of students going through no matter what changes you make, just as we have had with the introduction of OSIS. You cannot change two generations of students in one go. I do think that has to be thought about. Whatever changes you recommend making, the ones that are there at present also have to be thought about, because there are going to be a number.

1530

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Just following from this, on the matter of your presumption of maturity or dates of maturity, I think in your paper you sort of allude to differences in maturation between boys and girls during that period of time. Certainly,

personally my problems, if I can put it that way, in terms of separation and maturation, separation from my family and maturation came later rather than earlier. My period of confusions would have been from 16 to 42, but things are starting to get clear now, Fiona; I want you to know that. It is all coming clear now, but it was later for me.

I want to ask about that presumption. If you are making that part of the rationale for pushing it to 10, what are we basing that on in terms of where the actual development of kids is at this point, in terms of their preparation at that stage to make career choices. I do not have any problem with people taking general directions, but I really have concern about the few people who are like Joe Clark, who knew he was going to be Prime Minister for a few weeks when he was six years of age.

Mrs. Nelson: I think the difference between a 12-year-old making choices and a 16-year-old making choices is simply one where we are saying it would be better at 16 than at 12. The kinds of transition courses that trustee Parker is talking about would also make the choices at 16 less irrevocable.

We make credits very important at the moment, but that is because we made them important. We used to make the grade 13 departmentals very important until we found we could not get them marked, and then all of a sudden they were not important any more. So I think an awful lot of these structures are of our own making and can be changed. There are always children who blossom very early and some who are late bloomers, who are going to be missed with either of these organizations, but by and large, we think 16-year-olds are capable legally of doing certain things, and I think Radwanski's analysis of that particular situation is very valid and worth keeping in mind.

Things are far more complex now than they used to be. We talk about life-long learning. We better make sure we are leaving enough doors open for children to do these sorts of things. I think that is part of the thinking behind this.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I presume there are other questioners or I would ask others.

Madam Chairman: We have Mr. Beer on the list, but certainly if you have another question, Mr. Johnston, by all means ask it.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The one question I will then ask, if I can ask one other, is this: You say to leave the early formative years period alone, but most people seem to believe that for poor kids and for a couple of our minorities who have been disadvantaged educationally for years, whatever

reasons you want to put to it, the problems start very, very early. If we do not make the changes until later, as you are talking about in terms of the way our present structures work, are poor kids still going to miss out on this? Are they going to be so turned off the system by the time they get to be in grades 7 and 8 that it is not going to really matter that you have avoided some of these questions for them? What are the additional things that happen to them? There is a kind of streaming that takes place much earlier. I am wondering if you have any comments on that.

Mrs. Nelson: Yes, I do. Have you ever known me not to have comments?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Never.

Mrs. Nelson: There is nothing wrong with the document. It is the implementation that is the problem. I think the document is very good. It lays out a primary program that is based on activity, experience and sensitivity, all the right things to take care of the kinds of problems of poor children, minorities and everything else.

Implementation of it is far more difficult. We do not have enough primary specialists in the field. We do not have small enough classes yet, although we are getting there. There is a whole variety of things. If we had ungraded primaries from junior kindergarten to grade 3, which is envisioned in fact in *The Formative Years*, I think these sorts of things would take care of precisely the problems you are discussing. Once again, and this happens over and over again, not just at the ministry but also at local boards, we have super documents and so-so implementation. We have to get on with the implementation too.

I think that is one of the reasons trustee Parker has mentioned several times the matter of teacher training before we implement these programs, rather than after. I think it is very critical, so I hope if you are going to have a session on teacher training you will ask us back again.

Mrs. Parker: I think that is the big problem; we are still playing catch-up. It is wonderful for the parents and the public and all of us to see these marvellous changes on paper, but if the teachers have not been given a chance to have them incorporated in their training, then how are they going to put them into action? It is just not fair to do it in that way. As I said, we are still playing catch-up. The document itself we recommended leaving alone because we thought it was appropriate. But we did not say it has been implemented yet in the way we would like it to be.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: That is what I wanted to hear you say. It is true.

Mr. Beer: I am very interested in the points you have made about the intermediate division. Perhaps I could follow on with some of Mr. Johnston's questions in the same area. I have always been curious about the fact that some boards developed that concept of the junior high school. Some had the grade 7s and 8s off in their own particular schools. Are you aware if any study has been done in terms of the kids who—say East York, for example—went through that kind of system? Is there any literature on how they fared? Was there a net good? Was it grades 7, 8 and 9 in East York that were grouped together? It was something like that.

Structurally, in a sense, one of the things you are suggesting here, if we were to go that way, raises the question, would it be better to have elementary schools that went to grade 6 and then perhaps grades 7, 8 and 9 or grades 7, 8, 9 and 10 in kind of a separate place, and grades 11, 12 and whatever somewhere else? I am just curious whether there has been any kind of work done. I lived in Scarborough at one time where they had grades 7 and 8 together and those were sometimes referred to by parents, depending on how your kid was coping, as sort of glandular college or hormonal heaven. There were all sorts of concerns. But for others, they found that those were much more effective as learning situations; the maturation of their children.

Are you aware within ALSBO if that has been something that has been discussed, as to whether just in a straight structural sense that is possibly something we should be looking at as we proceed with new programs?

Mrs. Nelson: I think it would be extremely good if you could commission some research. To my knowledge, most of the research that has been done is American. Part of the rationale for junior high schools was to prepare children for high school because the transition was so horrendous from the one teacher all day to seven or eight classes a day, which makes you ask should they then not have been changing the high schools rather than trying to prepare the children for them?

It seems to me we are in fact looking now at the high schools, but still there is a stage there which is very different from childhood and very different from the older adolescent that I think needs some research. I think what there has been has been pretty empirical and very locally based. A lot of the senior schools were started after the war simply as a response to crowding and

accommodation, not pedagogical questions. They were developed as a rationale after the fact. I think it would be very useful to see some Canadian research.

There are enough examples of K-to-8 schools, senior schools, junior highs, the kind of school I mentioned in Wawa so that I think, on a provincial basis, you could get some very useful results, even if it was just anecdotal, from teachers who had participated in different kinds of programs; or from students or parents, because as you say a lot of the parental response you are hearing is for children who are either mature enough to take real advantage of it or so immature they are just left at the door. We need to look a lot more at actual experience, I think, in a Canadian context.

1540

Mr. Beer: Again, this is just by fluke of circumstance, but in my own riding there is an old school which now houses only the first four grades. It is very interesting when you go into that school to watch the kids in grade 4 and how they, in effect as the senior students, respond in that environment. They then go on in grade 5 to another school, which is a school which goes to grade 8 and which has had other kids going through to grade 4. This is anecdotal, but the comments that the teachers make about where the grade 4 kids are at is interesting, in terms of their social development.

Unlike Mr. Johnston, while we are confessing these things, grades 8 and 9 were my critical years when I was all over the map. I may still be, but that was my state, not in the later time.

I look at some of those structural things we do and I wonder to what extent that impinges upon and has implications for a lot of things kids do, because we were sort of commenting here that you can have your 13-year-old better able to make decisions than your 16-year-old and that kind of thing.

If one moves logically through that idea of a more split intermediate division—I am not saying you cannot do that in the current situation—where you have your grades 7 and 8 over here and your grades 9 and 10 over here, maybe that is one of the things we should be looking at, the experience that different boards have had where they have had a split into three rather than into two.

Mrs. Parker: But do some Canadian studies first, because the only studies I know about also are American.

Mrs. Nelson: The other thing, and I presume the reason you are having these sessions on the organization for learning, is that the structures

under which content is delivered are just as instructive to children as the actual content. They tell them a lot about their place in society and how they are regarded and everything else.

If we want children to grow up to function as good citizens in a democratic society, maybe we should consult them a little more, as well as their parents. I suspect it would not matter an awful lot what the organization was in the school. If that local community supported it, it would probably work. If the teachers, the parents and the children were involved in whatever had been developed, they probably would support it to such an extent that you could pull off all kinds of things. That has often been the case.

Madam Chairman: Are there any other members who have a question or two?

Mr. Mahoney: I might just ask a question on grade promotion. Unlike Charles, grades 8 and 9 were the best four years of my life, actually.

I am curious about your statement where you neither support nor oppose a rigid format, but then go on to say that grade promotion is contrary to your philosophy. If it is contrary to your philosophy, explain to me why you would not be opposed to it and are rather strongly in favour of subject promotion? I am a little confused with that.

Mrs. Nelson: I think the thing is that if we talk about being very much devoted to the idea of the development of the individual, the place where you see that come to its finest flower is in a really good primary situation, where the children are very much observed by the teachers and their programs are individually developed. It is not that the teacher has developed a package which she stuffs down their throats at different rates; she actually devises—he or she, usually she—a program for that particular child that depends on skill, level of maturation, whatever.

That seems to end at the end of primary in many cases for a variety of reasons. There is much more content to the program; there is much more possibility of evaluating that content rather than the child. This is why we are saying there is a philosophical problem for us in talking about grade promotion, but the implications of not supporting grade promotion are so immensely fundamental, as our entire system is based on it, that we were not able to develop that sufficiently for you.

That is why we had to give you that rather mealy-mouthed response. We would actually like to be able to look at that in much greater depth, but it is a tough one. For one thing, it would probably involve much larger numbers of

teachers if you were going to do it properly. You would get at some of the fundamental problems Mr. Radwanski discussed. There is a whole batch of things, but we simply did not have time. That is why we simply gave it the nod that we had tried to deal with it and had not been able to in that response.

Mr. Mahoney: In reality, subject promotion is taking place across the province in many situations.

Mrs. Nelson: Yes, but subject promotion assumes that there is a certain content. It does not really look at that child so much as the child but as a blotter and how much he has absorbed. I think what we are saying is that there is a lot more to it than having the child absorb content, so that subject promotion is simply a mutant of grade promotion. There is a lot more to it than that.

Mrs. Parker: It is very complex.

Mr. Mahoney: We talked this morning on the streaming issue, about how young people can get trapped having made that decision when they are 12 years old. How do you feel about developing policies and creating an atmosphere that would encourage children to move out of a stream into another stream, either through the encouragement of the teacher or through some marking system of some description?

It is not happening now. The example I used this morning was of my oldest boy who moved from general to advanced only after a lot of kicking and screaming, searching and fighting and trying to find out how this could happen. It is not something that was necessarily encouraged and yet it was a good move.

I am sure that must occur in many cases. The move does not take place. Could we put in place something that would encourage that move and allow it to occur?

Mrs. Parker: I think that would be a very good idea, but I also think we have to put the means to do it there. It is not good putting policies in place and saying, "Yes, encourage them to move," if there is no way to do it. For a student who wants to, there is no holdback at all.

Mr. Mahoney: Really?

Mrs. Parker: But for a student who is a little bit timid about doing so—well, no, there is not. If students are determined to do it, they can do it but they have to want to themselves enough to be able to retake the courses they need to take for prerequisites or whatever, or give up their whole summer, which is not a very good outlook for some students. But for the students who are not sure about it or who have never been told that it

can be done, there is nothing in place to encourage them. There is no means for them to do so.

If you are going to put policies in place, for goodness' sake put the means there as well. Put transition courses there so that it is easy for them to do so and tell them they can.

Mr. Mahoney: That is exactly my point. Put the courses in place. I would challenge your statement that for the students who want to, they can do it, that it is no problem.

Mrs. Parker: I did not say it was not a problem. I said they can do it. It is not impossible for any student to do it. It takes time. The amount of blocks in the way of a student who would like to do it but does not really have the time to spend on it are considerable; but they can do it, yes.

Mr. Mahoney: Regardless of the age at which we determine the decision should be made to stream, you are suggesting then that it would be a good thing to allow for changes in that through some in-place systems?

Mrs. Nelson: I think it is essential, because people can always make mistakes. Earlier on someone mentioned the fact that with OSIS there had been much more emphasis on guidance and that was a good thing. The next stage from that is Radwanski's mention of mentoring.

It would seem to me that if a youngster had made a choice and then found it was not right; or the mentor was aware that the child was misplaced, because sometimes an outsider might see it before the person himself or herself; there would have to be ways for him or her then to make the next stage without moving mountains, as you did, because most children's parents are not familiar enough with the system or pushy enough to do it. It takes an awful lot of push.

Sure, you can have the odd child who is so well motivated he or she will go to night school or will go to summer school, but that is too high a price to pay for one bad choice. The transition courses that trustee Parker mentioned are one way. Having far more fluidity in the system is another. We have tremendous rigidity.

1550

When, again, in people's lives do they ever change their mind, change their subject and change their location every 40 minutes, unless they are teachers, at the ringing of a bell? I mean it is pretty Pavlovian when you think of it.

Mr. Mahoney: Eighty minutes, is it not?

Mrs. Nelson: That is a semester.

There are tremendous rigidities built in. The excuse is that it is the fault of the computer. If

computers can get rockets off to various foreign soils and planets and things, surely they can program a school to accommodate the children better. I heard in the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation presentation how we have reduced English from eight periods to five periods a week to accommodate the timetable. If that is not a backward way to look at things, I do not know what is. We talk now about language across the curriculum, but even so, we need to have much more flexibility in the way we do things than we now do.

That is why we talk in our brief, for example in the intermediate years, of having far fewer subject categories, with much more eclectic stuff within them so that you can deal much more with basic things, such as language, right across the board. I think in those ways children would also have a better idea of the choices they were making than they now do.

They look at those option sheets and there are subjects there, maybe two or three lines describing them. As adults, having been through that, we are going to have some doubts. How can those children make up their minds? We need to be much more flexible.

Mrs. Parker: Either offer transition courses or take a good look at those prerequisites. Many times I think they could be looked at more flexibly than they are.

Madam Chairman: One final question from Mrs. O'Neill.

Mrs. O'Neill: I finally have had a chance to read through this alternative timetable arrangement, Mrs. Parker. I am interested in that. I am surprised, however, that it took the thrust it did. Knowing a bit about the area you come from, I thought you might have even gone into further alternative school plans and that kind of thing. I guess what I would like to ask you is, is this sort of halfway between the alternative school and the school that we now know as the regular secondary school? Is there any connection between the alternative school and what you are suggesting here, and is alternative education still growing in Carleton?

Mrs. Parker: You are talking about an alternative school system.

Mrs. O'Neill: Right. I am just wondering if this has any connection to that.

Mrs. Parker: No, it has no connection with that at all. Again, I think the same thing applies. It was a question on which we would like to have said a lot more, but to get input into this we would have had to have a lot more time. If we do have

the opportunity to talk more about it later, we would very much like to do so.

I think the concern is that the flexibility stays for the school boards. Semestering is not mandated, nor is any other kind of alternative timetabling. The school boards should be allowed to choose what is best for their areas, and within that the schools should be allowed to make decisions on what is best for their community, perhaps even down to the individual student. As I heard one of the OSSTF people say, maybe you can semester for a student inside a school system that is not semestered. With the co-operative programs that we have in place, that is almost done in some cases.

I am not as familiar with the Toronto board's flexibility, but I am sure Mrs. Nelson can talk on that one.

Mrs. O'Neill: Is alternative education, though, still growing in Carleton?

Mrs. Parker: Yes.

Mrs. O'Neill: Both in the French and English panels?

Mrs. Parker: All sorts.

Mrs. O'Neill: Okay. I hope somebody will bring that forward because I think that is something we need.

Mrs. Parker: The Carleton Board of Education is making a presentation to you.

Mrs. O'Neill: On that subject?

Mrs. Parker: That is part of their brief, yes.

Mrs. O'Neill: Good.

Mrs. Parker: I want to ask a question, if there are no others. Is it my turn?

Madam Chairman: We do not promise you an answer, but you certainly are free to ask the question.

Mrs. Parker: It is worth a try.

My main question is, what is going to be the end process from this committee? What are you going to produce and what are the time lines?

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Yes, tell her.

Madam Chairman: I will make an ad hoc decision here.

We originally were hoping that our report on this section, the goals and philosophy and the educational process section, would be ready before we went into our next phase, which will be in the winter session. The only problem with that is, not only does it take time for the committee to write the report, which we hope will not be too unwieldy a process, but the publishing and the translation, both in French and English, must be released at the same time. I would make a totally

off-the-wall guess and say we hope it will be in January. The clerk just said late February, so so much for off the wall. To give you a relatively accurate guess, I would say late February, but we will certainly be shooting for January.

Mrs. Parker: It is at that point that you will be producing a report. May I then ask a follow-up question? When this document appears, would it be possible to have attached to it a list of the recommendations that have come to you from the different groups that have addressed you so that it is possible, when reading that report, to look at how the recommendations have been incorporated into it?

Madam Chairman: Certainly, that would be a decision of the committee. The clerk cut in again. I know research will certainly be preparing that material for the use of the committee. I have seen it in committee reports before where they have itemized which recommendations came from particular groups.

Mrs. Parker: That would be very helpful.

Madam Chairman: I could not make that commitment at this time simply because the committee has not made that decision, but it is something we will take into account and it certainly is possible.

Mr. Jackson: If you ask me, I will give you a copy.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is a public document as far as I am concerned. It is a compendium of all the presentations and recommendations. Even if they were not part of the body of the document, that could be appended and made available to everybody, so that is not a problem.

Mrs. Parker: I think it would be very helpful. From my own point of view, I have had comments at our local board level saying that none of these recommendations will be— you will never see them again, so to speak. I feel that if you could produce them with the report, when we are reading the report it will be easier to see how they have been used.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I think it is only fair to say that the committee probably has the same sense about what may happen to its recommendations.

Madam Chairman: At the very least we could ensure that each presenter had a copy of the recommendations by the various delegations.

Mrs. Parker: That would be very nice.

Madam Chairman: But it might be even better to append it to our main report. We will certainly take that into consideration. I am sorry

we do not have an answer, but you have a promise of consideration.

Mrs. Parker: That is great. Thank you very much.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much for your usual valuable contribution to our committee.

Mrs. Nelson: We will be back.

Madam Chairman: That we can guarantee.

I am delighted to say we are now running exactly on time. Normally, it will never happen again with this committee probably. The Peterborough County Board of Education is ready to present. Perhaps you would like to come forward, please.

As Mr. Johnston just rightly pointed out, you are the culprits in the education of at least two of the members of this committee, namely, yours truly and yours truly, graduates of Trent University.

Welcome to our committee. Mr. Cotton, would you like to introduce your delegation?

PETERBOROUGH COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mr. Cotton: Thank you. I would like to introduce to you on my right the chairperson of our education committee, Shirley Horner. On my left is our director of education, Ray Linton.

We would like to thank you for the opportunity to make the presentation to your committee today. It has been a practice of our board to express its views on the major issues in education and to present reactions and comments on a variety of recent issues such as the secondary education review project, the Ontario Study of the Relevance of Education and the Issue of Dropouts, the Early Primary Education Project Report, Bill 30 and so forth.

We believe we have an excellent education system in Ontario. Our main interest as trustees is in preserving the delicate balance between provincial direction and local implementation/adaptation based on the needs and the interest of the communities we represent. Each of these two levels of government has a valuable role to play in ensuring the vitality of our schools, and should the provincial government remove more local control of such things as the organization of schools and remove the right of the local service providers to adapt the curriculum to our local needs, much, we believe, would be lost.

1600

We believe that local professional service providers working with local elected representa-

tives of the community should have a very considerable latitude in determining the local needs and in meeting those needs. In summary, we argue for more local authority, not less. Provincial, national and even international forces, such as the need to prepare our students to compete successfully for higher education and employment, ensure that rational decision-making will prevail at the local level.

Our system has taken a strong position on the importance of the early years in education. We strongly endorse primary division programming which recognizes individual student rates of growth and actively involves the child in the learning experience. We support a program which strikes a balance between the growth of students as individuals and the development of skills required to be a productive worker and citizen. Obviously, part of the debate involves determining which skills are necessary in this rapidly changing age. Perhaps the same skills and attitudes are needed for students to reach their greatest potential as are required by productive workers; that is, thinking skills, problem solving skills and social skills.

The major issues the committee is addressing are directly related to the organization of secondary schools. The secondary education review project in the early 1980s was a very extensive gathering of parental, community, business and education opinion on the future direction of secondary education, as well as the linkage necessary to bridge the education of elementary schools and post-secondary employment or education.

It is our opinion that the system of counting progress towards a diploma by the accumulation of courses with a combination of mandatory and elective credits is effective and more satisfactory than an established lockstep, grade-by-grade promotion. It is not productive, and is certainly poor pedagogy, to have any student repeat a subject that he or she has successfully completed simply because another subject area has not satisfactorily been addressed.

Of course, there will continue to be the argument about what should be compulsory and which options should be left to students and parents. It has been amply demonstrated in any survey of which we are aware that if all interest groups had their wish lists for compulsory courses, the mandatory list would include over 100 courses. It is unfortunate that in the last revision of the diploma requirements, there appears to have been a tendency to satisfy at least some of these interest groups by requiring one

compulsory French course, one compulsory physical and health education course, one arts course and one business-technical education course.

Regardless of the official list of courses for a diploma, surely the more critical issue is the learning that takes place within these courses. If thinking and problem solving and social skills were addressed in all courses, the specific knowledge component of a student's academic career would not be as critical.

The renewal of curriculum that is an integral part of the renewal of secondary education through OSIS is much more important to students than the cosmetics of how many courses and which one or which ones are mandatory. One analysis of these skills that our students will need in the near future was succinctly stated by John Naisbitt as "thinking, learning and creating." We feel there is evidence that the curriculum renewal spawned by OSIS is addressing these areas.

To effect real change in the education of our young people is much more difficult and requires more extensive time for the implementation than do the cosmetic changes brought about by OSIS: an increase from 27 to 30 courses for a diploma; an Ontario secondary school diploma rather than two diplomas; university entrance courses rather than grade 13. Strangely and unfortunately, even before schools and teachers have had a chance to adjust to these courses, adapt or learn new teaching strategies or implement the concepts necessary for these future citizens, we have serious proposals by critics outside the profession to throw it all out. Do such persons understand the system, or do they have realistic expectations?

With our endorsement of individual student programming in the early years and the consequent adjustment of later programs to meet different abilities and interests, we endorse the three levels of difficulty of courses in secondary school, recognizing, of course, the right of a board to offer certain courses at only one level of difficulty, thereby providing students with opportunities to interact with peers in a heterogeneous group.

We agree that we need to continue to strive to ensure that students are being counselled into the right level of courses, to improve the bridge between elementary and secondary school programming and to involve parents more in the decision-making affecting their child's education. However, without the variety of levels and the diversity of programs now available, we are convinced that many students would not continue

in school. You must recognize that not all students have the same abilities, the same interests or the same motivations, and ignoring these facts does not make them any less real.

In order for our schools to assist those students who still find no purpose or meaning to being in school, there is a continuing and very real need to introduce innovative programs; that is, programs that will stimulate interest and provide employment opportunities. Our board has found that the co-operative education programs can form an excellent basis for such students, and we believe there is a need to implement such further concepts as mentoring, alternative schools and re-entry programs to increase the retention of students.

The issue of semestering is a good example of educational planning that we feel should be left to the local level for a decision. To date, there is no conclusive evidence to support or reject the concept of semestering as one method of organizing the school's schedule. We see no reason that this should be an issue decided at the provincial level. We have found both pros and cons to the variety of organizational plans for school operation. At present, we have local support for semestered organizations which assist in our linking of schools to the community for scheduling co-operative education programs and allow more flexibility for re-entry students and for individual timetabling.

We realize that this position has opposing negatives in other areas, such as the lack of continuity in some subjects and the effects of long-term absences and so forth. Rather than examining how a school is organized, the provincial issue, we feel, should be re-examination of the school year to allow more flexibility in school scheduling. We feel that the out-dated school year operating from September to June is no longer appropriate and should be revamped to allow a variety of school organizations, balanced around natural holiday periods and permitting three semesters per year if the board or a community wishes to organize in such a fashion.

In summary, we feel strongly that the key to quality of education for our pupils rests with the relationships between teachers and the pupils in the classrooms. Such teachers should be well trained and regulation 262, general, should more closely reflect the need for teachers to be fully qualified in the subject areas they are allowed to teach. We believe in the basic structure established through OSIS for the accumulation of courses for credits, in a variety of courses offered

at various levels and in local determination of the school organization designated to provide the program.

1610

We recognize there will be continuing debate on the number of courses required for a diploma along with those prescribed. However, the biggest need now is to allow teachers and schools to proceed with the curriculum renewal and the alternative programs to improve the retention of pupils. Constant changes of direction are very costly in terms of developing and implementing new curriculum. They are also very, very wearing and disruptive for those teachers and students who are the persons most affected. The curriculum renewal and alternative programs now available can improve student retention, but our teachers and boards of education need the time, the funding and the support.

Implementation is a process and not an event. For true change to occur, it is not sufficient to develop a variety of new materials. Teacher attitudes and practices must be addressed in a meaningful way.

At this point in time, teaching styles that dominated the 1950s for the most part remain unchanged. Teachers have not been equipped to provide the type of education that encourages students to become self-motivated, self-directed and problem solvers. If teachers are even to begin to implement the intent of OSIS, time, energy and money need to be spent on providing them with the appropriate skills.

Energies directed to implementing improvements in an already excellent education system will be more productive than the demoralizing results of attacking the basis of the present structure or continuing a debate on the merits of back to the basics versus individual personal growth.

Our thinking and energies should be directed by the fact that in a democratic society, education is a personal and individual activity. However, to be happy, an individual must be able to fit into society as a productive worker and particularly as a good citizen. Therefore, we believe the challenge to society is to be prepared to offer the opportunity for each person to balance his or her development intellectually, morally and as an autonomous individual with his or her needs for skills applicable to employment and coping in society.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much, Mr. Cotton, for your concise and very well thought out brief. We have just around 15

minutes and we have four questioners. Mr. Jackson, would you like to start?

Mr. Jackson: Mr. Cotton, thank you for coming today. It was an excellent brief. You are the first specific board to come before us and that is appreciated. I guess one of my questions has to do with some of the questions that have been raised previously. Do you have a mix of semestered and nonsemestered schools?

Mr. Cotton: No, it is all semestered.

Mr. Jackson: You are totally semestered. Did you make that decision, as trustees, or did the schools and principals recommend that and the board approve it?

Mr. Cotton: We would like to think it was made by the trustees. It did start as a request from the community and the schools.

Mr. Jackson: I am intrigued by "a request from the community." Could you elaborate a bit on that?

Mr. Linton: Certainly there were principals who promoted it, I guess, within their community and in fact had a hand in generating it, but lots of the parent groups that came to our area had experienced semestering elsewhere and were very much in favour of it. Generally speaking, students tend to favour it. They tend to see the goal as much more immediate, more attainable, and respond more to that than the very long-range goal.

Mr. Cotton: Actually, what happened was that we had a request from a parents' group in one particular area and the staff supported it. We felt that was essential, to have staff support. We did a lot of research, a lot of investigating, visiting other areas and looking at all the pros and cons. After a lot of this investigation and discussion among the board and with administration, we decided to implement it in one of the schools. It was seen by the community, by the staff and by the trustees as so successful and meaningful that gradually it worked its way through until all the other schools had it.

Mr. Linton: I would say that with a few of the schools, the last ones to move in that direction did it out of self-defence because they were losing students to the other schools. The students felt they could proceed at their own rate more readily and that type of thing in the semestered school.

Mr. Cotton: Yes.

Mr. Linton: Many of them, especially good students, were moving to the semestered school.

Mr. Jackson: I would agree with you. I am pleased you raise that because that seems to be the point, that they are losing the grade 13s. Declining enrolment is bad enough; you do not need it skewed between one school or the other. So really, your experiences in Peterborough are similar to those in Haldimand. Once semestering begins to occur, it becomes a self-fulfilling thing across the system?

Mr. Linton: That is true.

Mr. Jackson: You make references to alternative schools. Do you have any such alternative school programs or schools in your board?

Mr. Linton: No, we really do not. We work closely with Kinark Child and Family Services. That is in a number of our schools. There is one of what I guess would be referred to as alternative programs. We provide them with space to do that on a fairly extensive basis in one part of our system.

Mr. Jackson: Statistically, if I might ask you very quickly, have you noticed any change in the statistics with your supervised alternative learning for excused pupils, or SALEP students, that you have been filing with the ministry, or with your dropout rate? Are you monitoring that? Is there a trend there that you can share quickly with the committee?

Mr. Linton: I would not think there has been a significant change. We tend to try to catch kids to get them working with Kinark and so on, prior to their actually attempting to drop out. Certainly, we have not had any increase in the numbers requesting the SALEP alternative.

Mr. Jackson: That is very good.

Mr. Beer: I, too, would like to commend you. I think in four pages you have touched on virtually every issue that has come up. That is no mean feat. As well you gave us a great line to use in speeches, "Implementation is a process and not an event." I thought that was good. I do not know who the father or mother of that was.

There are a number of issues to follow up on, but I wonder if I might just ask you a question with respect to your comments on page 3 regarding school scheduling and the re-examination of the school year. I am just interested in what your board has been doing in looking at—I suppose, really what you are pointing towards is the full-time, year-round use of the schools and being able to offer programs to students in a kind of spring-summer semester, possibly as well at other times.

What kind of review have you done of that? How realistic do you think that is and when do

you think you might like to be in a position really to urge that on as a viable alternative for school boards to bring in?

Mr. Linton: If I can have a go at that, it seems to me that the success of our summer school is very large and very well responded to and gives us the impression that there are lots of people who want to continue their education through the summer period.

I guess our thinking to date has moved along the lines of using a shorter summer holiday period, starting maybe in August, so that a semester can finish prior to or in conjunction with the normal holiday period of Christmas, starting again after Christmas and maybe ending further on, if you wanted to move some of your schools to trimesters.

You could break a longer year into thirds, with maybe a month off in total in the summer, instead of the 10 weeks or so that it tends to be at the moment. While we have studied it, we have not gone much beyond a very active summer program.

Mr. Beer: Is that something other boards do? Are there discussions among boards about that kind of approach?

1620

Mr. Linton: I think there are. I think it is coming among other boards now, because recently the Ministry of Education itself put forward some ideas with respect to school calendar that are just ideas at this point in time but they are out there for discussion purposes, and I think that has promoted it, very desirably.

Mr. Beer: Have you had any discussion in the context of your own board with parents' or teachers' organizations around that concept?

Mr. Cotton: I think, as Mr. Linton is saying, summer school is the one that kind of gave us the thought, and in talking to students and to parents there seems to be a desire and it would fit in well with the requirement. Shirley, would you like to comment?

Mrs. Horner: I do not believe we have actually had conversations or studies done within our board or with the public, but we have a very large adult education program running all through the year and we have a great summer school program. It really looks as if people in Peterborough like education.

Mr. Beer: I have one final question. You may not have the statistics, but it would be interesting in that context to have the number of students in your regular programs in the year, the number of students in the summer program and those in the

adult or continuing program, because I think this is an area that increasingly people are looking at. It may well be that there are a good number of boards which, particularly on the summer program, are having a similar experience. I would be interested in the numbers that are doing that, relative to your September-to-June school population.

Mr. Linton: Our enrolment for secondary school is approximately 6,200 on a regular day school basis. In the summertime, we range from 900 to 1,200. I should say that we provide a summer school service for some beyond our borders as well. We tend to have students come to us from Victoria county and from Northumberland-Newcastle. There are people who own cottages in our area, who are right there and are entitled to come to the summer school, and some do. So there is that kind of interest.

We have probably, at least according to the ministry officials, one of the most successful continuing education programs. Whereas funding issues and things like that tend to curb that in other areas, it has been growing by leaps and bounds in our area. I think it is due to a lot of the innovative ways it has been set up, moving it into programs that are not confined to one centre in the city.

Keep in mind that we have schools in the city, where two thirds of our population is, but we also have schools that are 45 miles from there. The way we set it up and decentralized the administration of it we pay according to the numbers enrolled, so that we can actually run small-enrolment classes and not lose so much money that the board is tempted to cancel it or things of that nature.

Mr. Cotton: There has also been a significant increase of students in summer school going for credits, wanting to use the time rather than repeat type of thing.

Mr. Beer: It sounds like a good argument for local autonomy and local option.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Open these schools on Sundays, that is the key.

I will start off by posing a critical question to you. Everyone has been nice to you, and your board deserves that, but if you look at what you said, you basically said the structure is fine, the system is working well and the only thing that is wrong is the way teachers are teaching. That is the way I read what you are saying.

It is interesting that you would have chosen that emphasis, and I find it a little disconcerting that it seems your language throughout is pretty glowing about the way the system is working,

and yet you then say teachers are basically using the same style of teaching they were using when they were teaching me in the 1950s and early 1960s, and that is what the problem is, which would seem to me to be a major problem as well as being a structural problem. You do not seem to want to deal with other structural matters as problems, but that is the one you focus on. It is interesting.

Mr. Cotton: I would like Ray to respond to this, but I think what we are really trying to emphasize is the change. We keep changing and not giving people time to adapt to it or respond to it. This year, for instance, in Peterborough we have 33 writing teams looking at curriculum changes. To implement that and to help the teachers understand what is being expected of them is a massive job. I do not know whether Ray would like to comment.

Mr. Linton: Yes, I would draw your attention to the things that we think are critical to whatever course you may be offering, whether it is history or science or whatever. Those have to do with thinking skills first of all. We are putting a great deal of emphasis in our system on thinking skills. It does not matter what you are teaching. We want you to present it in such a way that it poses problems.

You do not teach history as a series of chronological facts; this happened, that happened, and so on. You pose problems. You bring students actively to learn from various sources, not from one textbook maybe but from a variety of textbooks, to resolve that problem. They find out a lot. They find out that authors and historians disagree even on the facts, let alone how they should be interpreted, and all of those types of things. So whether you are teaching history or teaching mathematics, the actual content maybe is not so critical as the fact that you are teaching thinking skills.

It was mentioned by one of the earlier delegations about language across the curriculum. It was pathetic to see a science teacher teach science without actually taking words apart and pointing out where they came from, their base and all of that type of thing. Yet their training did not do that. In many cases their training taught them the scientific facts and things like that, but did not really get down to that type of thing, about how you teach language in a science course, how you teach thinking skills in a science course as well as the science fact and the other ones that we were promoting here, creativity and problem-solving skills, thinking skills and social skills.

We were talking, coming down in the car, about the ignorance of many people about what you might call civics. It does not seem to come into many subjects any more, but it could if the subject material is well thought out.

We think we have fine staff, to come back to the original point, but their training was such that "These are the facts within that course; present them like this" and so on and so forth, without presenting them in problem solving or thinking-skills modes, and we think that education would be greatly improved if that were done. For that, we need time to get at the new curriculum that is there, some resources, things of that nature.

Mr. Cotton: And money.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The reason I pointed it out was that OSSTF was here before you and took a markedly different approach to this than you have and it is the one area that you focused on.

I will mention two things, just briefly, because I know we are coming to the end of our time. Can you tell me what has happened to tech education in Peterborough? Most of the schools there had fairly good tech programs back aeons ago when I was involved there. What has happened since OSIS in your community? Has there been a major dropoff such as we have been hearing anecdotally about other areas? What are the figures like for tech education in Peterborough?

Mr. Cotton: We did an extensive study and a program on that. Maybe Ray can give you the results as they are up to date.

Mr. Linton: Yes. We decided that we did have the same kind of dropoff that was evident elsewhere. We also decided that we had a lot of shops that could not be properly updated. We have a graphic arts shop. The material was state of the art when it was put in there but it is 20-some years old. It is incredibly expensive to bring that up to date.

So we turned in a couple of directions. One, co-operative education, in which we hope the printing students will get a lot of that up-to-date, state-of-the-art equipment and experience out in the field in the co-operative education thing.

We also decided that we had to concentrate our advanced technologies in certain schools. We know from past experience that kids do not change schools very easily. They want to stay in their home school and that can be disaster. In actual fact, we have set up a system where, beyond grade 10 particularly, the advanced technologies are presented in certain schools and the kids are left in their home school and bused

part of the day to the other school to get this advanced technology.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Which schools specifically have advanced tech now in Peterborough?

Mr. Linton: The four in the immediate area of the city, which would be Adam Scott, Kenner, Crestwood and Thomas A. Stewart. Peterborough CI and VS does not have much.

1630

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It never really did. So they still have kept theirs, but the kids are mostly bused from farther away, Lakefield, etc.

Mr. Linton: Yes, there are a few that come from Lakefield and Norwood for those as well. In fact, we even have one of the advanced agricultural technology programs in Norwood. We do actually provide for a couple of students to go out there for that, but they are not nearly as heavily involved simply because of distance. They tend to accept the more generalized approach that is in those schools.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: One of the anecdotal things I have told the committee is that when I went to university in 1964, I was the first student from the Warsaw area who had ever gone to university at that stage. Most of my farming friends were staying much lower. Some of them were in four-year tech at that stage, but a lot of them were just into two-year high school and back to the farms and doing odd jobs in town, etc.

Have you done much in the way of studies of demographic changes within the county to see what has happened in terms of the participation in the education system of those kinds of groups and some of the kids from some of the poorer parts of the city, for instance?

One of my major concerns continually is the fact that some of my friends were streamed incorrectly at that time, without any doubt at all. Statistics in other parts of the province seem to indicate that is continuing, whereas some statistics show that more kids from farm backgrounds are going to university now than ever before. Have you done any analysis of that in the Peterborough area?

Mr. Linton: Yes. I would say we have certain schools where the dropout rate is fairly high in the early years, and then they tend to retain what is left very well, and they do go on to university. We have a unique situation in Millbrook in that in 1974 we inherited a school that has now only some 74 students in it. That area tends to send most of its nonacademic students, if you like, into other larger schools and then address the needs of those who are left. There is a very high

percentage who go on to university and it is a rural area. In so many of our rural areas, they are not really farmers any more; they tend to be workers in various industries. I think it has changed dramatically.

In terms of guidance and their choices, if they are erring in our system, they are erring on the high side. They tend to reach higher, and I do not object to that.

Madam Chairman: We have again started to run short of time. In fact, I think we ran out of it a few minutes ago, but I know Mrs. O'Neill always keeps her questions brief.

Mrs. O'Neill: I would just hope that when you go to the different school year you will really consult regionally. I think you are as aware as I am of the ripples next year's school break has caused throughout the central area, and I hope it does not become a totally local decision. I think we could get into chaos. I know there are other regions having the discussion at the regional level and I hope you will do that.

I found your brief very interesting. Again, I think it did touch on a lot of areas that certainly trustees and directors should be talking about. The thing I found very strange, and it popped right off the page, is that on your last page you say, "At this point in time, 'teaching styles' that dominated the 1950s, for the most part, remain unchanged." That did not seem to me to fit anything else you said. I was not a teacher in the 1950s; I happened to be a teacher in the 1960s. I walk into classrooms now and they are not doing things the way I would likely have done them in the 1960s, so I find this phrase quite interesting and I would like you to tell me what you mean by it.

Mr. Linton: I would say the comment is more true of secondary than it is of elementary. There has been quite a change.

Mrs. O'Neill: I taught secondary. I think there have been a lot of changes there.

Mr. Linton: I think some teachers certainly have changed, maybe as many as a third of them, where you see a significant involvement of students in terms of group discussions, problem-solving approaches and so on and so forth, but I do not think it is any higher than that. The others are basically still presenting a lesson they put together, a good solid lesson. There were many good lessons taught in the 1950s as well.

Mrs. O'Neill: I taught in the 1960s. Please do not put me any further back than that.

Mr. Linton: I taught in the 1950s, and that is what the statement referred to.

Mrs. O'Neill: It is kind of discouraging for those of us who have been on other ends of education, because we put so much into professional development. Collective agreements are built around professional development days. There just has been so much emphasis on changing things and teaching styles. That is why I find this phrase kind of disturbing in some ways, and certainly your comments have reinforced your statement.

Mr. Linton: I guess it came to our attention, particularly with moving to a total semestering situation with longer periods of time. It certainly requires an adjustment of teaching strategies. Where semestering was tremendously successful, it was where the teacher was able to make that kind of an adjustment in teaching strategies; and where it was highly criticized, it was because there had not been the change in teaching strategies. We have been working hard at that. That is why I guess it is a prominent thing on our minds. We are continuing and will continue to work hard on it.

Mrs. O'Neill: Good.

Madam Chairman: I would like to share the appreciation of the members for Peterborough board of education's presentation and for sharing your collective wisdom with us today. Please take back the good wishes of the three members of the Legislature who have close connections with Trent University, Professor Peter Adams, Richard Johnston and myself. I do not think you were ever a professor, right? You never made it.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Oh God, no.

Mr. Beer: He should have been.

Madam Chairman: But he did graduate. Thank you for coming today.

Mr. Cotton: Thank you for giving us the opportunity. We appreciate that.

Madam Chairman: The next brief will be presented by the Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists.

ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF CERTIFIED ENGINEERING TECHNICIANS AND TECHNOLOGISTS

Mr. Mitchell: It is with great appreciation that the Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists appears before you today. We had hoped to be heard. We realize we were somewhat late in making the application, so we are much appreciative.

May I say it is almost like a feeling of—I do not know whether to call it *déjà vu* or what, but

having served on your side of the desks, it is a little bit different position today.

If I may, with our numbers when we walked in, someone in the audience said, "Are you here to attack or to present a brief?" We are here to present a brief, we are not here to attack; but in numbers we are trying to show you the interest we have at OACETT in education and in this committee and in the directions and organization of education.

May I present, from the far left, John Fisher, our registrar, Bill Cresswell, who is our president-elect, Bruce Wells, the executive director, and our presenter for today, Jon Kiernan.

Mr. Kiernan: We have sent multiple copies of the brief to you, and rather than run through that, what I would hope to do is speak briefly in terms of background and focus and then my colleagues and I would field your questions.

The Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists is a voluntary, self-governing profession. It has as its purpose the enhancing of its members' own and of Ontario's technological capability.

The term "certified" is a very important one. It has to do with the fact that the members of the association have been subject, both as to their academic qualifications and as to their work qualifications, to the scrutiny of their peers and they have been adjudged to be worthy members of this profession.

Now a word of explanation and background to establish a context. What we call a certified engineering technologist in Ontario is what is called the engineer in Japan and those other technologically well-developed countries of the Far East and the Orient and of western Europe. The result is that the certified engineering technologist is the equivalent of 80 per cent of those engineers now practising engineering in the other countries of the world. As you know, we have a different system in North America, particularly in Canada, so that an educator and a member of this committee might have some difficulty in understanding the distinction between the certified engineering technologist and the professional engineer.

1640

As the certified engineering technologist is the equivalent of the handbook or workaday engineer elsewhere in the world, we feel a very strong and significant involvement in the educational process as it evolves towards the generation of technologically or technically educated persons.

We are intimately involved with the educational system in Ontario at the post-secondary level.

To some extent, we are involved also at the secondary school level in terms of contributing to guidance services within the schools. We certainly feel it is part of our responsibility to share in a pragmatic way the understanding of the technical workplace with educators both at the secondary and post-secondary level.

Our principal concern is the setting and maintaining of high standards of technical performance. We should point out that OACETT does not have any form of mandate to provide services of an economic benefit to its members. Our total objective is the pursuit of excellence in the field of technology in Ontario.

We would like to address your attention to what we perceive to be the educational climate in Ontario. We feel there is a paradox that must be faced and we feel encouraged that this committee is sitting, because we believe you are facing and coming to an understanding of this paradoxical situation.

It seems to be self-evident that we are tied in Ontario to a technologically competitive environment. Yet, at the same time, we find ourselves facing with some distress a belief that in our primary and secondary school systems there is a noticeable and quite specific lack of focus on the area of technical education. In our brief, we cite some corroborative viewpoints, and I would just like to identify three of those quickly.

The first is that of a committee of the Legislature, which in its report some three years ago, *Survival or Excellence*, said that "greater numbers of students are perceived to be ill-equipped to meet the expectations of first-year course work, compared to previous years." This is a statement made by people analysing what is happening in the technical programs within the community colleges.

The second report deals with orientation relative to education. It is drawn from the Premier's Council report of this year. It states that, "If there are too few scientists and technologists to serve our growing research and development needs, it is probably because our education system is not equipping students to enter these fields." We agree with that and are concerned about that reality.

The third quotation contained within our brief has to do with comparative factors. It is drawn from the Pitman report of 1986 and states that, "Unlike many European countries, we in Canada have given little attention to the various levels of

skills needed to effectively 'support' a high-tech economy."

Finally, we have discovered through the interplay that is coming back to us from our staff, from our registrar, from his staff, from the association's executive director and from our scores of volunteer committee members who are frequent visitors to the schools, to the community colleges and to the universities—they report back with consistent unanimity that the system does need some form of overhaul.

In our view, there are two areas of very significant concern which we identify in our brief and these have to do, first, with streaming, and second, with guidance.

As far as streaming is concerned, we are not opposed to the principle of streaming. We do believe, however, that the current streaming practice allows diminished options in mathematics and some sciences at a time that is far too early in the academic program. We feel the result is that potentially there is a disastrous effect on post-secondary choices for many students who are not free to accept the kinds of post-secondary schooling they would like to have because of a streaming decision they made, albeit voluntarily, but none the less that they made, we think, at a period too far in advance.

In the area of guidance, our field studies suggest that there is a disproportion—perhaps that is too strong a word, but it is a fair word—of guidance counsellors who have an orientation to the arts and/or to teaching and/or to what we call the soft sciences. It is our opinion that perhaps the ultimate solution may be to stream teachers of technology subjects towards the area of guidance, but at the present time we think a short-term solution is necessary so that some change in the system can be made relatively quickly.

We would like to make a suggestion and an offer to the committee. Our suggestion and offer is that our people, the 16,000 members of OACETT who are the élite of the technology team in Ontario, will be available to you and that our regional chapters could be used within the educational system as a means of augmenting the guidance programs in secondary schools.

We think the process of harnessing community resources, whether it be through drawing in people who are active in business or industry or recent retirees from business or industry or using our members as supplementary resources for the guidance process within the secondary schools, could be very beneficial to this province.

We believe OACETT's membership could contribute quite meaningfully to such an activity and we believe and are confident that our regional chapters would work enthusiastically with secondary schools with a view to enriching technology requirements within Ontario.

That, Madam Chairman, summarizes and focuses the brief that we presented. If you or your committee members have questions, we will do our best to field them.

Madam Chairman: I would just thank you for your generous offer to work with the secondary schools, but I might suggest it would also be helpful even in the elementary schools. They are trying to change the traditional role models and to introduce people into the elementary schools, I believe—at least certainly from what I have seen in my children's classes. I think it would do a lot of a girls a world of good to see what an engineer does and perhaps start focusing at an earlier age on the idea that they too might like to do this.

Mr. Kiernan: We would be pleased to take it to that level if requested, of course.

Madam Chairman: By the way, I have no official authority with this government. I am just saying I think it would be a marvellous idea.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I was wondering if you could tell me, just as a follow-up to the chair's insightful comments, what number of females are in your membership.

Mr. Kiernan: I can give you an answer to that question. Of the 16,000 members, there are 477. It just happens that crossed my desk last week.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is the kind of figure that sticks in your head.

Mr. Kiernan: That happens to be an increase of about 80 over the past two years.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: So it is a much higher percentage than in engineers as we know them.

The other thing I was wondering is what you are doing at present with the guidance offices—and I think the point about getting into the elementary panels is a very good one—in terms of written information that you send around. I gather from what you are saying that there is something happening already.

Mr. Kiernan: There are two things we have done. One is that we do respond to requests from guidance counsellors to attend things like career days or post-secondary days to speak to the students.

The other is that a couple of years ago we went into a venture with the Ministry of Education and produced an audio-visual in four parts which

teachers can teach from. It goes from the history of technology through to education choices and careers. It goes from apprenticeship in a skilled trade through the technician, the technologist, the scientist and the engineer. It is not focused on any one profession, but on the whole spectrum of technology and engineering applied science.

Those are the two mediums we are using at the moment to approach the secondary schools.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: How actively does your membership get involved in career days? Can you give me an idea?

Mr. Kiernan: It is a community-oriented thing. I am sorry we cannot give you any specific statistics. Our members tend, by and large, to be more active in the teaching programs of the community colleges than they are in functioning at career days in high schools, although career days in high schools have been something we have been anxious to encourage. Therefore, we certainly try to respond as vigorously as possible and to induce our members to respond vigorously.

1650

Mr. Wells: There is an increasing involvement, and that obviously depends on what part of the province you are in. I would say in the smaller centres there is a tendency to have more involvement than perhaps in the bigger centres, where there are a large number of schools. But certainly our involvement is increasing.

Mr. Beer: I think it is interesting, in terms of your brief, to recall the concerns that have been expressed, both to this committee and elsewhere, by a number of professional organizations that depend in their education and training somewhere along the line on the maths and sciences, on the more technical aspects of education. That concern is that we are starting to lose out or there is a potential that we are going to lose out if we do not really redouble our efforts to develop the kinds of programs, the awareness, and get young people into those programs.

I am not sure of the background of all of us around this table, but I suspect that we are inordinately high on the arts, if not the soft sciences. I do not know that there are too many engineers here at this time. That may also say something about some of the things that happen.

Clearly, while the involvement that you have with the community colleges is very important, you really are wanting to reach out much earlier in the system so that you can get an interest and get young people thinking about that as a career. I was just wondering whether, as an association,

you get involved with the ministry or with school boards in developing any curriculum or being consulted about it or perhaps commenting upon different kinds of programs that are offered, particularly at the secondary level.

Mr. Kiernan: At the secondary level, to the best of my knowledge, we have not been consulted by any school boards, and I think we would be reluctant to take an initiative to impose our views on them other than through the process, through the registrar's office, of contributing people resources for career days and such. At the post-secondary level of course, we have a much more vigorous approach.

Mr. Beer: In looking at the role that you are playing, particularly with community colleges and universities, do you see from that experience that it might in fact be helpful or useful if you could be more involved in putting forward ideas? I suspect that one of the things you would bring to that is to look at programs and perhaps have some more immediate sense of how those relate, whether later in community colleges or wherever, how relevant the kinds of programs are.

Mr. Wells: I would make the comment that our input in that area is probably more meaningful from a guidance or a concept area in terms of where this particular technology is going and where might it apply five or ten years down the line, as opposed to "Should this have more advanced mathematics?" or "Should this have this in it?" My registrar might have some differing views, but I think at the secondary school level our role was probably a little more as a guidance, an informational and perhaps a directional role as to what specifically is involved.

Our role is not to tell people what to teach, and we want to make that clear. That is not our business and that is not what we do.

I think it is fair to say that the area of education where we have had some impact in terms of curriculum, particularly in the 1960s and the 1970s when we used to be involved in accreditation in the community colleges, which we were moved out of—and that is a whole different issue that we are dealing with this government about. Hopefully, Bob has talked to every single one of you about it.

Mr. Mitchell: Not them all, but I will get them.

Mr. Wells: The other area where we have done a relatively major amount of work in the whole technical area is with companies in terms of their processes of upgrading, particularly from

the trades to technician and technologist. We have worked with the Ministry of Skills Development on that and with a number of companies. That is a little more where our role has been.

Mr. Beer: I think that is very clear. You mentioned earlier about the guidance function and perhaps that is an area, not only in terms of your association but also others who are involved in technical areas, which perhaps the committee should be looking at more closely to ensure that those kinds of ideas and options are in fact being well presented to the students as they begin to make their choices.

Mrs. O'Neill: I have a short supplementary on that. I am just wondering how involved you are in the governance structures or in the advisory committees of many school boards and/or community colleges. Is your association invited to participate and provide advice there?

Mr. Wells: As an association we are not involved. There are a good many of our members in particular communities who are on advisory committees as individuals, who are on school boards or councils, as any 16,000 people in the province would be. We have a lot of people who are involved in a lot of ways but they are not specifically there as members of our association.

Mrs. O'Neill: Does your association have an education committee?

Mr. Wells: We have what we call a registration board. We have an examination board and we have a board of examiners. I think if you put all of that together in terms of how we do it—John, would you call it an education committee and then some?

Mr. Fisher: I think so. The registration board itself is primarily concerned with the academic and experiential qualifications for a technologist or a technician to survive or compete in our society. That is what this high standards and registration is all about; it is part and parcel of that.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much for coming before us today and for your offer. Certainly, the Ministry of Education will be advised of your generous offer and may even take you up on it.

Mr. Wells: We appreciate the opportunity to come and thank you very much. We do have a women's committee that peddles technology too. So your comments at the start are of interest and we would be glad to steer you that way too.

Madam Chairman: The next deputation is from the Waterloo region separate school board. Welcome to the committee, gentlemen. The

members have received your brief in advance, so I am sure each and every one has read it. We have allotted 30 minutes for your presentation and for questioning. After you have made your presentation, we hope that you will allow enough time for questions.

WATERLOO REGION ROMAN CATHOLIC SEPARATE SCHOOL BOARD

Mr. Flynn: Let me begin by introducing Charles Yates, better known as Chuck Yates, chairman of the Waterloo Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board; and myself, director of education and secretary-treasurer of that board. Our chairman, Chuck Yates, will begin with an introduction. It is not our intention to read the full brief but instead to highlight certain points throughout the brief and to leave plenty of time for questions, if that is your wish.

Mr. Yates: We wish to begin by thanking this select committee on education for allowing representatives of the Waterloo Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board to share their views on the issues before the committee. We congratulate you most sincerely for taking the time to listen, especially at this time of the day, and to consider the information presented from a variety of sources throughout this great province.

Before addressing the four specific topics, semestering, grade promotion, streaming and OSIS, let us establish some important principles that will place our comments on the specific topics in perspective.

We recognize that the political and social environments of our times make it difficult to manage educational debates so that clear direction for educational practice emerges. We also recognize that most of what is being debated in education today is not new. Many of the underlying principles we argue for today in education were also argued for as far back as the "grey book" in 1939. The problem then and the problem now is the gap between philosophy and practice.

1700

We recognize that there are a number of publics to serve through education and the expectations of some of these various publics are often unrealistic and sometimes contradictory. We recognize that our economic world is changing dramatically. Our students will soon be entering a world-based economy. We are in a transition stage, moving from a manufacturing era, which defined a particular kind of job market, to an information era, which will define quite a different job market. The learning process

itself is not just being enhanced by new technology, it is being transformed.

Given these recognitions, we wish to respectfully offer the following caution to this select committee before commenting briefly on each of the four areas.

It is possible to become obsessed with structural or organizational elements within an overall structure and lose our focus on larger and fundamentally much more important issues, such as: In the Catholic system, given the very significant social and economic changes in our world, how will we preserve the core values of a Catholic education? How will we ensure the development and maintenance of quality relationships, relationships based on love as described in the gospels? In the world of the microchip, it is these quality relationships we will need most.

We do not want to minimize the importance of structures because good ideas and good initiatives die without the appropriate structures to carry them, but we do want to suggest that structures are secondary to people. The right people in the right place at the right time, interacting in productive ways, is the only way to ensure success. We will have more to say about this in our concluding remarks.

Mr. Flynn will now speak briefly about each of the four areas we were invited to address.

Mr. Flynn: Regarding OSIS, we would like to highlight the following points.

First, OSIS emphasizes attention to individual strengths and needs. We very much support that direction and welcome that emphasis.

OSIS retained the levels of difficulty that were included in its predecessor, High School 1, but reduced them to three, and we support this action.

OSIS retained the credit system but changed the number of compulsive and elective credits, and we find that a positive action as well.

We believe that OSIS, which governs education in this province from grades 7 through 12, is basically a sound document. It is not perfect and it will require a review at some point, as do all government policies and/or board policies.

The fundamental and we suggest positive changes initiated by OSIS do require time, however, to be properly implemented. The most fundamental change introduced by OSIS in our view was the decision to develop new curriculum guidelines based on up-to-date learner and societal needs, knowledge gained through good research and the best of current classroom practice. Those guidelines we have found to be a

real boon to our educational system. We find them to be of enormous benefit to our educators. They are written on the basis of broad input and they are faithful to the philosophy of OSIS. Most are written for use by classroom teachers and they seem to recognize and are faithful to the three levels of difficulty.

These guidelines, again in our view, for the first time in our history provide the opportunity and the necessary assistance for secondary school teachers to plan relevant, high-quality and career-related classroom programs at each level of difficulty.

Given that little bit of preamble, we do have a recommendation contained in our brief at the end of the section on OSIS, that is, that the organizational and structural policies contained in OSIS be retained without change for an appropriate period of time to permit the OSIS-related curriculum guidelines to be effectively implemented.

Regarding streaming, we have the following highlights. The levels-of-difficulty arrangement was included in OSIS by the ministry only after extensive study and research. We support this arrangement wholeheartedly and in our Catholic secondary schools we strongly resist any notion of streaming in practice as the levels-of-difficulty arrangement is implemented. We suggest that streaming, which is the assignment of a student to one level of difficulty, usually the basic level, is the result of bad implementation and not the fault of the arrangement called levels of difficulty.

We elaborate on this point in the text of our brief and we use the example of students who are labelled mentally retarded. To exaggerate the point, we describe this as being sentenced to life in a class or school for the mentally retarded with little or no recognition of the individual gifts each of these students bring or can bring to the life of a school. The same kind of thing is true for students within these levels of difficulty. These are examples of not just bad implementation, in our view, or bad practice; they are examples of injustice.

We suggest with appropriate staff development and appropriate support services leading to competent identification of individual strengths and needs, and the development of quality programs that address those individual strengths and needs, that levels of difficulty is a very workable strategy. We recommend, in regard to this issue, that the present levels-of-difficulty arrangement continue to be supported by the Ministry of Education and that the necessary staff

development and supportive services be provided to ensure a more successful implementation of this strategy.

I should say that I am not suggesting there that we are necessarily asking for more money. I think we are calling more for emphasis on attention to the issues of staff development and supportive services, many of which are already in school systems but not, in our view, applied to this issue.

Regarding the issue of semestering, subject to existing regulations school boards are responsible for organizing the structure of the school year. Based on what we know at the present time and subject to further and ongoing review, we support the semester system as an appropriate method to deliver education programs. It is simply a strategy to be used by administrators as they modify and adapt the structure of the school-year calendar to both provide and take advantage of all possible educational opportunities for students.

We find semestering to be in the overall best interests of our students. We present a number of advantages of the semester system in our full brief. At the same time, however, we acknowledge that there are shortcomings or some disadvantages to semestering. We continue to try to overcome those shortcomings. In regard to the issue of semestering, we offer a recommendation that, based on present research and experience, this board supports semestering, but alternative methods of organizing the school year will continue to be studied according to the benefits they provide for all students.

Grade promotion: We do not have a great deal to say about this issue. We suggest that if the basic philosophical underpinnings associated with the other issues were in place, the use of the word "grade," "grade promotion" or "grade failure" would not be an issue. We feel that this issue boils down to what basic assumptions and what basic concepts about human ability the practitioner holds in his or her mind and heart when these phrases are used.

We know, and most teachers have always known, that each child is unique and will proceed at his or her own rate through the sequence of skills, regardless of the structure imposed on him or her by the school, the teacher or the system.

At the secondary level, of course, the implementation of the credit system has almost eliminated the issue of grade promotion. In regard to this issue we really do not have a specific recommendation.

Mr. Yates: In conclusion, the Waterloo Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board feels strongly that its future lies not in a major investment of time and energy in consideration of structures but instead in an investment in people. We are greatly encouraged by more recent ministry guidelines which clearly emphasize the development of the people involved in the implementation of programs.

We recognize that the structures we have discussed are not perfect and that there are some shortcomings in the implementation of these structures across the province, but we also see some very positive actions being taken at the ministry level and at some local levels in this regard.

However, the most hopeful sign for the future is that although there are rather serious structural and cultural barriers to realizing the goals of education in Ontario, there are many examples throughout the province of effective schools or at least schools that are markedly more effective than others and schools that are capable of change. It seems that in some schools and in some school systems, competent, persistent, forceful people can tighten up the setting for themselves and others, affecting what the organization is and can be. These people can reshuffle the organization paradigm by injecting it with a new set of values, which are reflected in assumptions, expectations and commitments.

1710

We believe it is possible to achieve the highest in both organizational performance and human satisfaction. This will be possible only if people in the organization feel they are part of the shaping, as opposed to being shaped; if they feel the objectives of our organization are an extension of their personal objectives and that, therefore, in a very deep way they are the organization; and if they feel that collectively, we can create what we want for our school system, our children and their families and, to a large extent, shape our own destiny.

A recent re-analysis of much of the literature on effective schools and school change—Clark and others in 1984—catalogued the factors that one finds working in a mutually reinforcing way in successful schools. The bottom line shows that the difference is people—people acting on their values and affecting what the organization can be. Teachers affect student learning by the expectations they hold for student performance and their own teaching performance. Students affect one another by their level of achievement and expectations. Principals and superintendents

make a difference when they exhibit active support in the form of communicated expectations for success.

The key for effective schools lies in the people who populate particular schools at particular times and their interaction with these organizations. The search for excellence in schools is a search for excellence in people. People matter most.

Knowing that we can create what we truly want, each of us has the opportunity to rediscover and reaffirm our own vision of organizational greatness. Rather than burdensome problems to be solved, current organizational circumstances, such as semestering, streaming, grade promotion and OSIS, can be viewed simply as indications of how far we have come in the creative process. These concerns or problems then become vehicles for learning, rather than enemies that destroy our efforts.

It is in this spirit of optimism and creativity that we have offered our comments. We would like to thank you for the opportunity.

Madam Chairman: Thank you for your very positive brief. I was going to say it was well worth listening to, but you have given us a lot of food for thought. We will start with Mr. Johnston.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Well worth the wait as well, at the end of the day. I thought that was what she was going to say.

However, I do want to challenge the premise a little bit. I think no one would deny that people matter most. In fact, if we had used that slogan in 1971 instead of "people matter more," God knows where we could be today.

It also—as it was attacked then—is a dangerously two-edged sword, because to say that the structures do not matter, people matter is to say that the people who were working in the 1960s or 1970s in the system were not giving all they had or we were not doing that, if that is where the problem lay. I guess that would be the similar sort of question I would lay about whether attacking the teacher is the appropriate thing.

These are all structural matters, and we do not need to bring in OSIS if it is not going to make a change. Of course people matter, but we have to look at the structures as well. I would just like to say that, if I might.

The Catholic system is in a very interesting position coming before us now, because if we look at some of the issues we are dealing with, and streaming specifically, not being funded fully in the past has meant the large bulk part of the Catholic system has not had to consider

providing full option, if I could put it that way, at the secondary level and has, therefore, not had to deal with the same kinds of outcomes the public system has had to deal with in terms of the dropout rates. In fact, many of the kids were streamed into the public system and then had to go to vocational schools or whatever outside of your own system up to that point. So hearing you come at it now, I think it is going to be very interesting to hear the approach to streaming and other kinds of matters that comes from the Catholic system at this point.

I wonder if I can ask just a few factual things. I know a little bit about Wellington county's approach to things, I do not know much about Waterloo's. Can you tell me at the moment—I am reading between the lines—what your policies are around segregated classes at this stage for learning disability, etc.

Mr. Flynn: We actually do not have a policy on integration and segregation, but the practice of the board is that we do not have segregated programs. We feel very strongly about the integration of young people with special needs with their peers and think that we are offering some leadership to the province in how that can be done. It is a difficult challenge, but we are involved in the people business and in the development of people—all people. As the Minister of Education at the time when Bill 82 was introduced in the House, December 12, 1980, said, "To be separate is to be inherently unequal." I agree, and we agree within the system and try not to separate anyone, whether it is in a special class or in a particular level of difficulty. We think that should be overlaid.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: There is a real parallel with Wellington in terms of my understanding of what is going on there.

Mr. Flynn: Yes.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I think that actually speaks very positively to models that the public system, which is quite afraid of this in some ways, can maybe look at. But even within the Catholic system there is a real range of approaches to withdrawal and segregation, etc. How do you deal with the issue of resources to the class that has, say, added two developmentally handicapped kids to what may already be a fairly high average class size in a lot of the separate system?

Mr. Flynn: I guess the best way to respond to that is to recognize that each board has a pot of money and the board sets up its priorities in terms of how that money is to be spent. I suggest that the Waterloo Region Roman Catholic Separate

School Board is probably spending a little more money in resources for those kinds of issues in terms of paraprofessionals, social workers, behavioural consultants, those types of self-governing professional groups within education. I do not think we have many more. I think we are relatively well served in that area and have probably paid a little more attention to that.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Is it a team approach?

Mr. Flynn: Yes, very much an interdisciplinary team approach. I would like to say too, though—and the research would agree on this issue—that it is not an issue of resources. Resources are important, and I do not want to become airy-fairy about it here, because it boils down to what it costs, but the bottom line really is commitment. You have to believe in it and you have to want to do it. If you provide the appropriate staff development, based on the appropriate philosophical approach, I think it works.

I do not know whether my chairman would agree or not, but the recommendations we have brought to the board to deploy staff through the system speak to that. They speak to the philosophical basis that we are operating from and to putting our money where our mouth is. We do not ask a teacher to take a child without any assistance whatsoever. In fact, as director, my opening speech to the teachers and principals was that help was as close as a phone call. If you have gone through the proper steps, sought an interdisciplinary team—everyone agrees, there is consensus that this need is there—you have it; and I have the backing of the board to say that. That is the commitment at our level to this issue, and that kind of commitment tends to percolate through the system.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I will not call in the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association local to check on it. I have heard from an OECTA membership elsewhere of a class of 36 or 37 with two or three fairly disabled individuals in it and a very committed teacher who is burning out very, very quickly. It is nice to hear that there is an administrator against that.

Mr. Yates: Can I comment too? First of all, I think where the special kids are is a priority within the school system. Of course, they are one of our top priorities. Second, in a very few years we have to learn how to stop streaming our children into the public system, because we were not allowed to do anything but that previously.

I am not an educator; I am a trustee. This is a professional; I am just a layman. As a layman, I see the benefit not only to the special kids in the

classroom but enormous benefit to the other kids in the classroom. They are learning something I never learned. We talked about relationships in here. By God, you cannot get much more basic than that. You have to educate away all fears, dislikes and hatreds in school, I think. You do not get it at home as much as you should. I think you will in the next generation, because the new parents will have it in school. I think this is one way of doing it. Our philosophy is integration.

1720

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I entirely agree with you philosophically. It is nice to hear that people are doing it practically.

Can you give me two bits of information? You, obviously, as have most Catholic boards, have had an enormous change in the number of basic level courses being taken and students taking basic level courses. Can you give me an idea of what the numbers are like in the last couple of years?

Mr. Flynn: We have about 4,500 secondary school students in grades 9 to 12 Ontario academic courses. We have about 30 per cent of those students at the moment involved in one way or another in a basic level course. That may be only one course, ranging from one course up to about three quarters of their course load being at the basic level.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: What about your tech courses? Are you purchasing or providing?

Mr. Flynn: We are providing what we call a full range of tech services. In fact, the board has gone to considerable expense leasing space off school property and setting up a tech operation in this leased space as a temporary measure. We offer a full range.

You have probably heard this, but the interest in tech is dropping to some extent. In our area it has levelled off. Again, it boils down to a people issue. We have someone co-ordinating the tech area who is a very dynamic individual and has done a real selling job in the schools. If anything, it is on the rise again in our area. That is how it is handled.

Mr. Villeneuve: Thank you, gentlemen, for your presentation. I am a little confused on exactly where you stand on streaming. You also mentioned to my colleague Mr. Beer, I believe, that you are not looking for more money, but you make a number of statements. Would you clarify that for us, please?

Mr. Flynn: We found "streaming" a difficult word to deal with. We do not like to use the word "streaming" but we were asked to address the

issue of streaming. We chose to come at it by recognizing that within OSIS there is a levels-of-difficulty arrangement.

We assume that when the reference is made to streaming, we are speaking of a student who is assigned to the basic level of difficulty or it may be one of the other levels of difficulty for the full course load. It becomes almost a sentence. They start out there at the beginning and really never get out of that particular level.

Our view is that this is bad implementation. It was not the intent of levels of difficulty. The directions were quite clear that a student's program should be overlaid over all three levels of difficulty. In order to do that, you need people who are pretty good at identifying individual strengths and needs. Of course, you have a record coming from the elementary school, but you need to know quite specifically where they fit in the different levels. Streaming, we assume, is meant to indicate the assignment of a student to one level of difficulty as opposed to what was intended, that is overlaying on all three.

Mr. Villeneuve: So you are speaking of a multilevel of difficulty in different subjects, I gather. The implementation of this seems a little bit difficult. Could you touch on how you might be doing that without coming down to classes of 10?

Mr. Flynn: In some areas it is not as low as 10, but it can range from 12 to 15 with a particular group of students who really need some very specific, individualized assistance.

We have to back up and talk a little about how students get placed in those instructional groupings. Who makes those kinds of decisions and based on what criteria? We have done a lot of work with our secondary school people in terms of how to use the information coming out of the elementary system to their advantage and how to add to that through good educational assessments and good other kinds of assessments so that wise decisions can be made about the strengths.

It is not unusual for a student, in our system at least, to be involved in courses at all three levels of difficulty. They have had a dismal history in mathematics through the elementary system, and through assessments we may determine that math is certainly not a strong suit and basic level is where that student will benefit most from mathematics; but he may be terrific in the language arts area and may be advanced in that, or in a technical course, so the students are assigned. That does take time. That takes a pretty well-oiled guidance department.

Mr. Villeneuve: So there would still be some streaming but there would be a lot more work done on the strengths and the weaknesses, if you will, of individuals. We are still talking a certain degree of streaming but in a broader sense.

Mr. Flynn: Yes. I would resist the use of the word "streaming," because the assumptions that flow out of that word tend to be that you are down here and the next student is up here; you know, we are talking about different streams. Maybe it is a distinction without a difference, but it is more useful to my view to talk about it as levels and one student is operating at one level for a particular course and is moving to another level for another course, so that no one is labelled as poor generally.

Mr. Villeneuve: Thank you. That hits right on it in the last one.

Mr. Jackson: Would you describe what your thoughts are on ability grouping in the context of what you just told us? Where does that phrase fit into your understanding?

Mr. Flynn: I think there is a place for ability grouping. I would not want to have our system set up entirely on the basis of ability grouping, but I think there is a place for ability grouping. We do that in terms of education of the gifted, enriched education. I think there is a place for ability grouping and a number of other kinds of grouping strategies within the system. That is why we like OSIS and support what it says. We think the philosophy is right on.

We would like more time to continue to be creative and add new and additional ways of thinking and acting, thinking and behaving in terms of meeting student needs. We think we are getting pretty good at it and we think we can be much better, given the material we have at the present time; but if wholesale changes are anticipated, it will really stretch us. We do not have the resources to go back and begin to implement a whole new set of changes.

Madam Chairman: I think something struck a nerve, because we now have supplementary requests from Mrs. O'Neill and Mr. Beer.

Mrs. O'Neill: Would you be able to tell us if you have been able to grant any credits to any of your developmentally handicapped students?

Mr. Flynn: We have; in every case. We have not yet had a so-called developmentally handicapped student leave our system without at least one credit. In three or four cases it has been a co-op credit and in one case it was a co-op credit for modeling, but it is a credit.

Mrs. O'Neill: Do you also use the strategy of peer tutoring within the secondary system with the development of the handicapped?

Mr. Flynn: We do, and I appreciate the question. I think we have come to understand in the last couple of years that one of the greatest resources we have within our school system is the students, the student body. We have started what we call a student networking system or a peer group support system that I can only describe as phenomenal. In fact, I will use Mother Theresa's phrase and say I can't really tell you about it, you have to come and see and you have to hear the students.

These kids come forward in droves; kids we did not expect might step forward. When the call goes out for peer support people and a little bit about what they are to do, they step forward strongly and want to get involved and stay involved. It has been a great experience for us.

Mrs. O'Neill: I hope you will publish some kind of a paper on that. I think it would be very helpful.

Mr. Flynn: Sure.

Mr. Beer: I suspect there are a number of places in the province where we might like to send you out to talk about the philosophy of education.

Mrs. O'Neill: He has been out there for a long time.

Mr. Beer: As you developed the program where in fact your practice was not to segregate students, did you have to spend a great deal of time discussing that with parents? Were you under a lot of pressure from parents—I am not talking about the teachers, but parents of some of these children—that there should be some kind of withdrawal or segregated class situation? Was that an issue?

Mr. Flynn: That really has not been an issue. In my three years with the Waterloo region separate school board, I can recall only one parent who has in any serious way raised the issue of, "My boy, 15 years of age, has finally found a safe niche; leave us alone," sort of thing.

I cannot live with that morally as an educator, because where does that child go? Where does that young man go at 18 or 20 or 21? If that is the kind of education he has, the only place left is an institution, for \$40,000 to \$60,000 a year out of taxpayers' money, when that young man could be contributing, paying taxes and holding down a job. We see it time after time.

We will not refuse a placement for parents who insist on that kind of placement. We will work

something out for them, but we will continue to negotiate very strongly with them for something better for their young person. In this case, that happened.

Mr. Beer: The second question relates to the resources that you put into your teacher development. It strikes me from your comments and the kinds of programs you have been developing that your board is a very hands-on operation. Relative to other boards your size, would you have a sense, in terms of your priorities, whether in fact you do spend more time and more money on teacher development in order to bring about the kinds of results that you believe you do?

I am not saying you could take any system that Queen's Park was sort of throwing out, but I sense that what you are fundamentally saying is, "Look, the way we motivate ourselves within our system is such that we can make OSIS work or we can ensure that kids are not going to be streamed because they are from a poor family into the basic grouping or what have you."

I am trying to find where the magic key is, in a sense, as to where your priorities go. I would suspect that teacher development, as teacher support, would have to be awfully critical on your board.

Mr. Flynn: It gives me great pleasure to hear what you have said because you captured our message beautifully. If I had to leave you with one thought, that would be it. How have we done it? I think it is more than staff development. First, the major issue is leadership. There has to be

commitment in the mind of the board. There has to be commitment on the part of the chief executive officer and the people the board employs to help that person carry out the tasks.

You have to know what you are about. You have to believe in it and you have to let people know that you believe in it. It has to be strong. There has to be integrity wrapped around all of that kind of issue in terms of leadership in the system—the political leadership, the professional leadership and so on. I see leadership as a major issue.

Almost as important, and maybe just as important, is the issue of staff development. Our board two years ago gave us approval to hire a staff development consultant and we have never looked back. That department is expanding. I expect it will continue to expand with board approval. It is doing absolutely marvellous things.

I think staff development has been a neglected area in school systems in this province. It is difficult to lead if you have not got somebody to help you convince the troops. I think the best way to do that is through good staff development.

Madam Chairman: Thank you very much, Mr. Yates and Mr. Flynn, for sharing your ideas with us today. It certainly gave us some stimulating dialogue. The committee will adjourn until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

The committee adjourned at 5:34 p.m.

ERRATA

No.	Page	Column	Line	Should read:
E-7	E-271	2	38	<p>Chronic underfunding has made it difficult for the universities and colleges to increase their enrolment in line with the significantly increased demand for higher education. One in 20 qualified applicants was denied admission to a university in Ontario last year, and estimates are that one in 10 will be denied this fall; and only 65 per cent of qualified applicants actually enter post-secondary education, due to the inadequacy of student aid and housing.</p> <p>This has led to excessive admission mark requirements at Ontario universities. It is now virtually impossible for a student with less than a 75 per cent average to obtain admission to most arts programs in all but two or three universities in Ontario. The mark cutoff for admission to engineering and many science programs is in the 80s and 90s, even high 90s. I believe it is 94 per cent for one program at the University of Waterloo in engineering.</p> <p>As well, tuition has climbed constantly, doubling in the last decade.</p> <p>We are concerned about the impact of this on the educational aspirations of students currently in elementary and secondary school. When they see intelligent, hard-working students being denied admission to university or colleges or forced to go into programs that do not lead towards their career choice, they have reason to conclude they too will not stand a chance of getting in.</p> <p>If the government does not act decisively now to improve accessibility at the post-secondary level, the next several cohorts of high school students may become discouraged about the particular subjects they are teaching.</p>
E-9	E-377	2	18	<p>1210</p> <p>Second, our council believes in achievement testing. We think there should be a little more of it. We do not consider that achievement tests are substitutions for evaluation by teachers of the performance of their students in class or in a course. We do not believe that easy, one-off, multiple-choice achievement tests accomplish very much. We</p>

CONTENTS

Monday, September 12, 1988

Organization of the Education Process in Ontario	E-519
Ministry of Education	E-519
Afternoon sitting	E-544
Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation	E-544
Association of Large School Boards in Ontario	E-555
Peterborough County Board of Education	E-564
Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists	E-571
Waterloo Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board	E-575
Adjournment	E-581
Errata	E-582

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Chairman: Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)

Vice-Chairman: Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)

Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)

Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)

Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)

Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)

Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)

Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)

O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)

Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)

Substitutions:

Beer, Charles (York North L) for Mr. Reycraft

McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L) for Mr. Keyes

Clerk: Mellor, Lynn

Staff: Porter, Ann, Research Officer, Legislative Research Service

Witnesses:

From the Ministry of Education:

Beavor, Wally, Assistant Deputy Minister, Learning Programs Division

Roy, Sheila, Director, Centre for Secondary and Adult Education

Hogan, Shannon, Director, Centre for Early Childhood and Elementary Education

From the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation:

Head, Jim, President

St. Amand, Doris, Vice-President, Professional Services

Eaton, David M., General Secretary

Buckthorp, Bob, Executive Assistant, Research and Information

From the Association of Large School Boards of Ontario:

Nelson, Fiona, President; Trustee, Toronto Board of Education

Parker, Carol, Chairman, ALSBO Curriculum Committee

From the Peterborough County Board of Education:

Cotton, Eric W., Chairman

Linton, R. J., Director of Education and Secretary

Horner, Shirley, Trustee

From the Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists:

Mitchell, Robert, Assistant to the President

Fisher, John, Registrar

Cresswell, Bill, President-Elect

Kiernan, Jon, Consultant

Wells, Bruce G., Executive Director

From the Waterloo Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board:

Yates, Chuck, Chairman

Flynn, George, Director of Education and Secretary-Treasurer

NOV 21 1990

3 1761 1146613 4

